Narrative Approaches in Counselling Supervision

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the
University of Waikato
by

Kathleen J. Crocket

University of Waikato
2001

Abstract

This thesis is an account of a project that investigated the possibilities for counselling supervision offered by the philosophical positions that produce narrative approaches to counselling. Thus, the research was positioned as a social constructionist project. It drew on the work of five local counsellors who met together regularly over a year to engage in reflecting team supervision and to reflect on the practices thus produced. The project recognised, too, that local professional cultures have produced supervision in particular ways.

Out of this project I have come to tell some supervision stories differently. Most recent mainstream approaches to counselling supervision construct supervision as a generic activity, and an activity that is best produced independently of particular metaphors of counselling practice. I argue that such approaches appear to be constrained by their inattention to the epistemology of practice. Aspects of dominant supervision discourse place an overriding emphasis on supervisor responsibility, producing an apparent dependence upon instrumental practice. When the emphasis is on supervisor responsibility, counsellors tend to be produced at the margins of the very activity that the profession constructs as critical to their effective and ethical counselling work with clients.

In contrast, the focus of this analysis is on the possibilities for a supervision where responsibility is relationally exercised and dialogically produced, whether in dyadic supervision or in a professional community of concern such as offered by the reflecting team used in this study. The analysis demonstrates a shift to an understanding of supervision as having a moral and ethical focus: from asking the instrumental question, *what to do with Client X*? counsellors and supervisors ask *what are the effects for practice of thinking this way*? *What are the effects for clients of practising these ways?* With this shift, the discourses of counselling practice and the positions for counsellors within those discourses are available for rigorous investigation, with an emphasis on the politics of practice. I argue for a politics of supervision practice that responds to the location of supervision itself as a site of professional governance, and takes responsibility for the kinds of

professional self the practices of supervision are called to produce. Professional truth claims, both those that construct supervision and those that construct counselling, are shown to be open for examination and negotiation in a constructionist supervision practice. In the dialogical examination and negotiation of professional truth claims in supervision, a storying counsellor professes the moral and ethical authority by which they produce their work.

At the same time as it is a serious practice of ethical responsibility, supervision also depends, I propose, upon counsellors and supervisors taking up the imaginary. When we ask what counts as professional truth, when we ask how things might be otherwise than they are, we take supervision dialogue into other dimensions. When we take seriously our responsibilities to profess, to story our own professional identities in action, we generate also, I argue, possibilities for storying the pleasures of our counselling work. To take supervision talk into the domain of the imaginary and of pleasure, is to produce supervision otherwise.

Acknowledgements

I offer my thanks to all who have made this project possible, both directly and indirectly. Joan and Jim Sparrow, my parents, have continued a long commitment, expressed in many ways, to my education. Joyce Crocket, my mother-in-law, told me in the last weeks of her life that she had always thought that the graduate study I was then doing should have followed my undergraduate degree many years earlier. Alex Crocket has continued that cheering on. I thank Alastair for his unfailing care for me in this task as in whatever I have taken on. Megan and Hamish inspire me with their own intellectual aliveness and have warmed me with their support for my work. To the friends and family who were constant supports through the project and those who made particular contributions at particular times, I give my thanks.

I recognise the contribution of those counselling supervisors with whom I have worked, and those counsellors who invited me to work with them in supervision. Some fuelled my early interest in supervision; some contributed to the possibility of this particular project; and others, currently, provide the professional relationships in which the ideas of this project are further enlivened. I thank Lorraine Smith for her professional companionship over a number of years. Students in the counselling programme, too, have in different ways opened possibilities that have been taken up in this study: their questions and contributions stay with me. I thank those students in the 2001 Professional Practice of Counselling course who offered interest in this project and understanding of my commitment to it amidst a busy teaching load.

I acknowledge the support from Dr Wendy Craig as Director of Student Services in the time I was given for the data-generating phase of this project; and the Dean of the School of Education, Professor Noeline Alcorn, and the Chair of the Department of Education Studies, Logan Moss, for a School Development Fund Award that made possible some teaching relief at the final stages of the writing. I thank those who took on this teaching: Sue Burns, Wally McKenzie, Donald McMenamin and Elizabeth Brown. I thank Val Lazenby, Secretary, Department

of Education Studies, who assisted me with transcribing and who has offered ongoing encouragement.

It was through my membership of the counsellor education team at the University of Waikato that the possibility of this project was illuminated. I thank my colleagues - Wendy Drewery, Wally McKenzie, Gerald Monk, and John Winslade - for the richness of the team community in which I worked as the project was conceived, and for the many opportunities there have been to put the outcomes of the project to work in the counselling programme.

Dr Wendy Drewery has been a member of that team, and so a colleague and friend, as well as my doctoral supervisor. The challenge of living out respectful relationship from those different positions is not one I underestimate, and I treasure the steadfastness of Wendy's colleagueship and the wisdom of her scholarship as we have managed at once collegial projects and tasks and this doctoral project. Dr Monica Payne has been joint supervisor with Wendy. I have valued the assurance and constancy of Monica's belief that this task would be completed, that I could do it, and that it was worth doing. That, too, has been a gift.

Finally, and significantly, I acknowledge the professional colleagues and friends who were the participants in this project. I thank Anne, Clare, Kate and Liz for their trust in me and in each other in joining this project, and for the commitment of time, enthusiasm, collegiality, and professional care that they offered, and for their ongoing interest in the project. Their openness to the possibilities of the project did indeed produce possibilities.

Kia ora koutou katoa.

Contents

Prologue

"Our selves, our minds – and, indeed the society in which we live – are all co-created projects, never solo performances in which we have star billing and others are mere background. We celebrate the other, for without the other there is no existence for us either". (Sampson, 1993, p.142.)

With gratitude and humility I acknowledge and celebrate all the 'others' who in a great variety of ways have made possible the project represented in this thesis you now read. I greet them, and I greet you as you join me as reader.

> For too long, our major cultural and scientific views have been monologic and self-celebratory – focusing more on the leading protagonist and the supporting cast he has assembled for his performances than on others as viable people in their own right. (Sampson, 1993, p.ix)

And surely a doctoral thesis is a cultural expression that might readily bring forth the monologic and self-celebratory. Here I am cast as leading protagonist, having assembled a cast made up of both research participants and contributors to and commentators on the discursive fields in which this project is located. Here am I, perhaps cast as grand teller of a grand tale, a sole performer in the supposedly sole performance of a doctoral thesis. But Sampson's words draw attention to the ethic that I worked to address as I began this project, that I lived out at the data generating stage of the research process, and that I have continued to struggle with as I write this thesis. That ethic is about serving practice. Sampson's words remind me of the importance of both what I write out of and what I write into. I begin, then, acknowledging the ethical dimensions of this project, and the call, to live and practise and write in ethical relationship, that is part of the cultural and scientific view upon which this thesis stands.

Chapter One

An introduction to the study

Introduction

This thesis document tells many stories, but two in particular run from beginning to end. One story is an account of how counselling professionals in a New Zealand setting might produce counselling supervision when our work is informed by the narrative metaphor. This is the story that I set out to tell when I began this project that has been an important focus of my professional life over recent years. A second story is about the production of the research process: I will introduce that story below.

In introducing this first account here I argue that the storying metaphor of narrative approaches to therapy might be appropriately applied in professional supervision. When the stories people have and tell about themselves are understood to be constitutive of identity, supervision might be understood to be a site of storying and thus producing professional identity and professional practice. I suggest that the tasks and responsibilities of counsellor and supervisor when they meet in supervision are more similar than different: to take this position is out of step with most accounts of supervision. Both counsellor and supervisor are concerned with the production of the counsellor's professional identity and so with the production of ethical and effective practice. In this production, the emphasis of the supervision relationship is upon collaboration and upon collaborative storying, as counsellors become researchers of their practice, engaged in supervision and counselling in ways that are generative rather than reproductive.

Further, this study has led me to argue that the understandings of power offered by discursive approaches to therapy have particular implications for supervision, both for how supervision is constructed in particular supervision relationships and how the profession constructs supervision. In particular, I suggest that responsibility in

supervision and for ethical counselling and supervision practice is produced relationally. I argue that supervision itself should be understood as above all an ethical practice, concerned with the ethics of its own production and with the ethics of the relations produced in and for counselling. Of particular interest to me in this investigation are the interrelationships between international and local professional cultures and the strategies of governance in which supervision is implicated in the local professional culture.

But let me move now to the story of the beginning of the project, when I developed both my research questions and a process to answer those questions. For that story, the story of producing a research process that would be congruent with a collaborative ethos of narrative therapy, is the second story told in this document. It is a story told explicitly and transparently for I believe that the successful interweaving of practice and research is not to be taken for granted.

In writing now about this project's beginning, I am of course no longer the inquirer I was when I began. Not only has my research practice been transformed in and through the research process but the field itself has shifted in significant ways during the project's life. There are always tensions in writing research reports when studies are located in a philosophy of knowledge more suited to diachronic (across time) telling when reporting formats support a synchronic (slice of time) perspective (Polkinghorne, 1997). Recognising that tension, I continue this introduction by locating myself and the hopes with which this project was begun largely in the terms of my research proposal, for I want the study's genesis to be understood. In narrative accounts meaningfulness is produced through location in place and across time.

Locating myself and the genesis of this project

I came to this research project out of three professional roles - as a counsellor and a supervisor, and as a member of a team of counsellor educators. At the time the project began I had worked as a counsellor for fourteen years. Throughout this time I had engaged in individual, peer and group supervision of my own counselling practice, with supervisors representing a range of theoretical

perspectives and using a range of working styles. For some years I had also provided professional supervision for counsellors in community and education settings, with changes in my style of supervising reflecting my changing philosophical and theoretical orientation. While working as a counsellor I had contributed part-time to counsellor education, most recently as a member of the team in the Department of Education Studies at the University of Waikato. As an active counselling practitioner, my teaching focus within counsellor education was professional practice. I had become particularly interested in the interface between students' university-based learning experiences and their placement-based learning, and the critical role supervision plays as students of counselling produce themselves as professional counsellors. I was also interested in supervision as an ongoing aspect of professional practice mandated for all counsellors in professional codes in New Zealand, as it is in the U.K. (New Zealand Association of Counsellors Code of Supervision, 2000; British Association of Counselling, 1996).

Most particularly, however, I was brought to this project by the philosophical standing ground of the University of Waikato counsellor education programme. As I saw it, this standing ground offered an opportunity to make, and indeed required, some important developments in supervision. The programme drew on the richness of a variety of traditions. Firstly, as a professional counsellor education programme, we were positioned by our identifying as *counsellors* professionally associated with the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC), whose Code of Ethics and Code of Supervision further informed our expectations and understandings. I note here, too, a matter to which I shall give attention later, the influences of differing institutional practices in counselling supervision in the United States and in the United Kingdom, from where we draw our literature and some practice traditions.

Secondly, and more significantly, the counsellor education team had made the decision to locate the programme in social constructionist ideas and the approaches to therapy characterised as narrative (Monk & Drewery, 1994; Monk, Winslade, Crocket, & Epston,1997; Winslade, Monk, & Drewery, 1997). Internationally and locally, and particularly at the time I began the study,

postmodern developments in therapeutic practice had been led mostly by those who either currently or historically identified themselves as *family therapists.* Michael White, David Epston, Jill Freedman and Dean Combs, Wally McKenzie, Johnella Bird, Vicky Dickerson and Jeff Zimmerman are particular examples. In New Zealand, narrative approaches were very much more in evidence at family therapy conferences than at counselling conferences. Many narrative therapists had a background in social work rather than counselling. However, here at the University of Waikato, we were teaching the ideas within the context of a programme that had historically focussed on an eclectic approach to *counselling and guidance* in school and community contexts. In the programme we thus called on two major traditions, family therapy and counselling, each with its own histories, understandings and practices around supervision (Todd & Storm, 1997a), and each with its own literature and theory base. In this bringing together, we were breaking down some of the distinctions between the fields. This study, then, has drawn on the history, theories and practices of both fields, not to develop a unifying or overarching version of supervision, but so that I might use the possibilities both fields, family therapy and counselling, offer for bringing forward an account of supervision located in constructionist ideas and a New Zealand counselling context.

At the time I was asking what constructionist ethics and practice meant for supervision, there seemed to me to be some significant gaps in the supervision literature. As the study began there was not a great deal available in either the practice or research literature about the implications of the postmodern shifts in counselling for counselling supervision. As well, I was aware that in the 1990s the trend in supervision practice was to distinguish supervision as an educational process rather than a counselling-related one. Interest had moved towards generic models of supervision and away from counselling-linked approaches (Carroll, 1996; Holloway, 1995). And yet, generic approaches tended not to account for their own paradigm locatedness: in contrast with accounts of narrative therapies, generic accounts of supervision seemed more concerned with the pragmatics of practice, paying less attention to the ethics of practice. Beyond generic approaches, what might the narrative metaphor and its supporting philosophical positions offer to counselling supervision? That was the question this study was

intended to investigate. I did not seek to provide some new universal approach to supervision but in the spirit of constructionist research and practice I wanted to offer an account of supervision that was local and situated.

My research questions, as I began, were these:

1. **What does embracing a social constructionist position, and in particular the narrative metaphor, mean for how supervisors and counsellors engage in professional supervision?**

2. **What constitutes effective counselling supervision in this counselling community?**

3. **What, then, are the implications for the education of counsellors and supervisors in supervision in a narrative mode?**

A research practice for a counselling practitioner

My research questions had been constructed out of my own professional history: that history also meant that I approached the tasks of investigating these questions in certain ways. As a researcher, I wanted to serve the professional practice community by engaging in a data-generating process that treated the practice field with integrity and by offering an account that would make sense to and be useful to practitioners. While this stance was clear, the pragmatics of such practice were not. I was satisfied that my philosophical base and the ethics of my practice supported each other in counselling: in research I did not have the same confidence. My own earlier experiences as researcher and researched had left me dissatisfied, and those experiences were located within a wider professional story that reflected tensions in the relationships between counselling practice and research. That is a story I will address more fully in Chapters Five and Six.

As I considered how I might answer my research questions, I looked to the professional skills and knowledge I already had. Established skills and knowledge could support my move into that with which I wanted to become more accomplished. On this basis, I adopted a process of "inquiry in which the

knowledge processes of practice are given a role complementary to the processes of research" (Hoshmand, 1994, p.36). For example, the reflecting team, the "prosthetic device" (Shotter, 1992, p.64) which I chose to use to investigate supervision, had a history as a therapeutic device rather than an academic research one. At the same time, my site of inquiry, the professional practice of supervision, was one where researchers had not usually directed the lens upon themselves: like most counselling researchers, supervision researchers had studied others (Carroll, 1996; Neufeldt, Karno & Nelson, 1996; Sumeral & Borders, 1996; Worthen & McNeill, 1996, for example). The study of others is, after all, proper and usual research practice. However, it seemed to me that if I were to put under research scrutiny the work of other counsellors and supervisors, it would be appropriate that I put my own counselling and supervision work under the same scrutiny. I wanted to be a researcher *with,* rather than a researcher *of,* my colleagues. The ethics of research practice were clearer to me than the method I might employ.

And so a fourth research question joined the other three: **what kind of constructionist research processes might enable me to answer these questions?** As I have indicated, this question has become as central as the other three in the production of this project. To this fourth question the answers about how I might generate data at first seemed more readily available than the answers about how I might generate tools of analysis. However, in the event, both categories of "answer" proved elusive at times. Hoshmand asked,

> Should one conduct a simple survey study or a neatly controlled analogue experiment, or should one risk the "imperfections" of a clinical or applied study? (Hoshmand, 1994, p.4)

I have lived with the risks and imperfections, as well as the satisfactions and delights, of a work that is both clinical and applied.

This second story is not only a story of how a research process was conducted, but is also a story of how, positioned in these ways, I constructed this particular research process. As a counselling practitioner, familiar with reflecting on my

work in counselling, I have been similarly reflective about my work in this research project. Constructionism has offered me particular theoretical resources for the work of reflection.

The study

Briefly, the study investigates supervision from a constructionist perspective, using as its primary data the supervision conversations of a group of local counsellors and supervisors. In this way the study draws on the traditions of reflective practice (Moon 1999; Polkinghorne, 1992; Schon, 1983, 1987), while taking reflective practice into new domains. The supervision research group was set up for the study, working together in a reflecting team process (Andersen, 1989, 1995; Davidson, & Lusardi, 1991;. Lowe & Guy, 1996; White, 1995, 1997, 1999). I will describe this practice in Chapters Two, Four and Five. I was a member of this group of five counsellors/supervisors who met fortnightly through a year for supervision. The reflecting team structure, together with further layers of group review and inquiry, opened our supervision practice to research inquiry. Transcripts of our supervision and research conversations provided the data for analysis. Over the time of the data-generating and data analysis the practice field and the literature were both rapidly shifting, and my own understandings of the implications of postmodern theorising continued to expand. The questions with which I entered the inquiry remained important to me and I was engaging with them as an active practitioner in a range of sites in my practice, not only that to which this research study is limited.

As the study proceeded, my understandings of the implications of constructionist theorising for the practice of supervision were extended. And at the same time, I also extended my understandings of the possibilities of constructionist theorising for my research practice. I came to understand more fully that the inquiry with which I was engaged was woven into a complex web of ethical, pragmatic and epistemological questions. These questions would lead me to locate the study more particularly than I had when I proposed it. Such an outcome is not unexpected in a research study based in professional action and reflection. I came to locate my research questions more particularly within the discursive turn, and to conceive of my work more purposefully as a broadly discourse analytic work.

On this basis, this document responds to my research questions by considering them on terms drawn from discourse analytic inquiry. I introduce at this point the theoretical resources, *discourse* and *positioning* that I employ to structure the study. These are important concepts for understanding what follows.

Discourse

Discourse can be said to be a system of rules and relations of power, manifested in social practices, which also constitute those practices in interactive fashion. Discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which we speak" (Foucault, 1972, p.49). I investigate supervision as discourse. In this investigation I ask questions. These questions render visible the discourses which produce supervision. I ask, what is this *object*, this practice, supervision? What is being "talked into existence" (Willig, 1999b, p.114) when professionals, or others, write or speak about, or speak within, supervision? How has supervision been produced, at different times and in different places? And how is it being constructed moment by moment as our research group works with it in a particular instance of practice? How has supervision been constructed that we come to employ these strategies? With these questions I focus inquiry on the work that supervision does as a professional practice. What is supervision called to do as counsellors and supervisors reproduce its practices? For how supervision is constructed as an object, conceived of as a professional, ethical practice, determines and is determined by what we do as individual counsellors and supervisors when we meet together in supervision. What are we called to do as we reproduce the practices of supervision? As counsellors and supervisors we produce and reproduce the *discourse practices* of supervision: we employ and are in the employ of its strategies. These strategies become visible in the texts, written and spoken, that constitute the canon of supervision and the everyday speech acts of supervision.

Supervision is of course not constructed as a singular object, but rather multiple constructions co-exist, confirming and distinguishing and contesting each other. Within this project, I explore some of the constructions of supervision that have become dominant, and consider the effects that dominance has had. I ask what has produced their dominance and what other constructions of supervision there

are and what effects those constructions produce. How do local or particular or alternative discourses of supervision produce or interrupt dominant or other local or particular or alternative discourses of supervision? These are questions that guide my investigation of supervision practice as it is represented in the literature, and as it was re-presented in the practice site in which I studied it. And as I conduct this investigation of a different genre of supervision discourse another question is always present: how do constructionist ideas and the narrative metaphor construct supervision as an object?

In constructing an object, discourse also produces subjects (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 1969; Parker, 1994). And so my inquiry considers the subjects produced by supervision discourse. As different versions of supervision are produced, different subjects are called into being. How do particular supervision discourses produce subjectivity for supervisors, I asked. What sort of subject is the counsellor who is produced within the terms of this discourse? What relations are constructed between these subjects, counsellors and supervisors? What *power relations* are produced within this discourse?

Power relations and positioning

Discourse is understood to produce subjects in relations of power. "We *should* talk about discourse and power in the same breath," suggested Parker (1991, p.18). Relations of power made manifest in and produced by discursive practices determine who may speak and when, and what might be spoken about and in what terms. However, relations of power do not work with only singular action: the terms of a discourse are not complete or final. Nonetheless, relations of power produce the expressions of subjectivity that are available within the terms of particular discourse practices. Parker (1991) suggested that discourses call us into positions which we can identify by asking in what ways "the discourse is hailing us ... and making us listen as a certain type of person" (p.9), and then, "what are we expected to do when addressed. What rights do we have to speak?" (p.10). This is the concept of positioning, a place to which we are called, in relation, within a set of social rules, practices, power relations and ways of speaking. Discourses produce and are produced by relations of power and thus produce *positionings* which subjects occupy. And so in this study I investigate the

positionings offered to counsellor and supervisors, in particular, in the discourse practices of supervision. I investigate both those positionings that grand narratives of supervision offer and produce, and those positionings that particular intimate professional conversations, within this project, offer and produce moment by moment in the encounter between a counsellor and a supervisor.

Willig suggested that positionings might be thought of as being produced in two dimensions (1999). Firstly, since "discursive positions pre-exist the individual" (p.114) individuals might be understood to take up subject positions constrained by the limited availability of pre-existing positions in discourse. Secondly, individuals might take up in an "active and purposive" (p.114) way positions which discursive constructions make available. These positions are taken up for what Davies and Harré (1991, p.45) called their "social (illocutionary) force", for the ways they work as social actions. Constructionist practice in counselling seeks to make use of this theoretical point for therapeutic purposes.

Davies' distinction that discourse "has effects", that it produces positionings that can be taken up and that it does not identify the speaker's "real nature" or the real nature of the spoken-of, is an important one for this study (1998, p.136). The distinction draws attention firstly to the idea that the self is constituted rather than essential: an individual's actions make sense in relation with their "lived history", their "sense of their own embodiment", and the access they have had to and their "familiarity with a range of discourses" (Davies, 1991, p.140). Secondly, moral action, then, is not an essential act of an essential self but rather moral action is the selecting of an appropriate "vocabulary of action" (Gergen, 1996, p.22) within the terms of the discourses to which one has access and so within the positions to which one has access. What counts as moral action depends then upon the discourse, the moral order, within which the action is produced.

I emphasise here the import of these ideas – about the accessibility or not of positions within discourse - for how I go on to read supervision texts, both the literature on which I have drawn and the primary data texts I have used for analysis. These ideas offer the theoretical resources I use to investigate firstly the positions offered counsellors and supervisors within the terms of various

supervision discourses, and secondly how counsellors and supervisors are constituted through various discursive practices of supervision.

Finding positions that I might use to make readings of discourse and positioning in supervision has been a particularly central aspect of my producing this project, for the path to those positions has seemed not particularly well trodden in practitioner research. As well, amongst those who have taken up the discursive turn in social science research there are multiple and competing versions of what such a path might look like (Burr, 1998; Davies, 1998; Merttens, 1998; Parker, 1998, 1999c, for example). In Chapters Five and Six, I shall return to a full discussion of my positioning as researcher. However, I introduce this matter here, to indicate that while I employ the theoretical tools of discourse and positioning in studying supervision, I do not myself step outside discourse to do so: as a researcher, I am constituted by discourses of research.

The structure of this document

The final task of this chapter is to introduce the process of this document's argument. Chapter Two introduces further the philosophical standing ground of the project amongst postmodern social theories. A discussion of the narrative metaphor and the theoretical resources upon which it depends is used to further develop an account of the location of the study. I describe reflecting team practice in therapy. This chapter also sets out the questions that my work as a narrative-informed counsellor raised for how I might understand and practice supervision.

In Chapter Three I turn my attention to the general field of supervision, paying particular attention to work that has had some influence in New Zealand settings. I discuss the matter of responsibility in supervision, showing how many accounts of supervision construct responsibility as residing unilaterally in the supervisor. Supervision has been distinguished in the literature from consultation, training and counselling and I investigate these distinctions and their effects. Reviewing dominant discourses of supervision, I also account for my interest in going beyond the current mainstream emphasis on generic approaches to supervision. Lastly, I give detailed attention to the construction of the supervision relationship within supervision literature, arguing that counsellors have often been positioned at the

margins of the very activity that is intended to ensure that their practice is effective and ethical. I argue for a version of supervision that pays more attention to the positioning of counsellor and supervisor in relation, and to the positioning of counsellors for moral action.

Chapter Four investigates some aspects of supervision in the local professional culture. Then, using Rose's (1991, 1998) ideas about governance, it considers the ways in which particular speech acts or particular organisational moves have constructed supervision and constructed supervision as a tool of professional governance. I argue that it behoves the counselling profession to take care about how we, as counsellors, implicate supervision (further) in professional-self governance. The final section of Chapter Four considers postmodern accounts of supervision, as they are available in the international literature. I draw on narrative and solution-focussed accounts that make links between the processes of counselling and those of supervision, and I discuss their emphasis on collaborative practices and power relations. Group and team supervision practices are reviewed, with an emphasis on the reflecting team supervision literature.

Chapters Five and Six describe in detail the construction of the research process. Chapter Five begins with an exploration of the implications of my own professional practice history for the ethical stance I brought to this project and for the practical choices I made. I investigate my own positioning in research discourse, noticing the competing and, at times, confusing positions to which I was called in the process of generating a site for constructionist inquiry. The activities in which we engaged as a research group in data-generation processes are then given attention. Data analysis is the focus of Chapter Six, where I investigate a range of constructionist options available to me and locate my choices within the wider field of discourse analytic practice. Chapter Six concludes with a reflection on my positioning as the writer of this document.

Chapters Seven to Eleven offer an analysis of supervision based on the data generated at the site of my study, a group supervision and research practice. Chapter Seven investigates the discourse of supervisor responsibility, noticing the positions in relation for counsellor and supervisor that this discourse produces.

Examples from practice illustrate the calls to supervisors to exercise responsibility, provide expertise and to provide instruction, all within a somewhat paternalistic relation. The data also suggest that the centring of responsibility and expertise in the supervisor may not position counsellors well for the production of ethical counselling practice.

Chapter Eight uses examples from practice to illustrate aspects of constructionist supervision practice. Here, the supervision relationship is produced as a dialogic one, where authority is situated and knowledge is generated in collaborative inquiry and in research-of-practice inquiry. The data offer illustration of a counsellor well positioned for ethical action in their counselling practice. Chapter Nine continues the discussion of what the data suggest a constructionist approach to supervision might look like. The first example from practice illustrates a collaborative assessment of concern about the safety of a client: responsibility is exercised in the relationship. The chapter moves on to illustrate the purposeful positioning of supervision within a moral order of liberatory practice as a supervisor refuses the call to instrumental action. Instead she investigates with the counsellor her positioning within employment relations and professional discourse.

Reflecting team supervision is the focus of Chapter Ten. Here, examples from practice illustrate the reflecting team working as a professional community of concern. As a professional community of concern team members engaged in relational and dialogical investigation of our positionings in particular discourses of professional practice. The work of actively producing ourselves as counsellors in supervision is rendered visible in these examples.

Chapter Eleven explores the celebration metaphor, a provisional tactic produced in the group as a counter-practice. An example illustrates the storying of professional identity that a celebration agenda made possible. A further example demonstrates the restraints on the rich storying of practice and professional identity when such practices have not been mutually negotiated. This example provides the opportunity to theorise two aspects of the storying of professional identity. The first of these is an investigation of the extension of the celebration

metaphor to suggest that supervision might be a site wherein counsellors take pleasure in our work by richly storying those aspects of our work that are pleasing to us. Secondly I offer a discussion of the storying subject, asking about the terms on which the storying of professional identity might be richly and ethically accomplished.

A similar theme runs through Chapters One to Six, and Chapters Seven to Eleven. That theme is ethical action. I introduce this study with the claim that this document is an account of research as ethical action, rather than of research as instrumental action. Similarly, I argue that counselling supervision is concerned not only with the instrumental actions of counselling practitioners but with the ethical actions by which counsellors produce their professional identities. Supervision does not take place independently of the moral orders within which we make sense of our professional practice and so of our engagement with clients.

In Chapter Twelve, I discuss the implications that this study offers for the practice of supervision in constructionist mode, particularly in a New Zealand counselling setting. Then, in Chapter Thirteen, I describe the application of ideas from this study in an example of my practice in counsellor education. Chapter Fourteen offers a summary and conclusion, drawing together the two stories identified in this current chapter. It again locates the study and the contingency of the knowledge it has produced, both knowledge about supervision and knowledge about research.

Chapter Two

Locating narrative approaches to counselling

Persons give meaning to their lives and relationships by storying their experience, and ...in interacting with others in the performance of these stories, they are active in the shaping of their lives and relationships. (White & Epston, 1989, p.21)

Introduction

This study is located within the streams of social theory variously and divergently characterised by commentators as the narrative turn (Polkinghorne, 1988), the linguistic turn (Fairclough,1992; 1995), the discursive turn (Parker, 1999), the relational paradigm (Gergen, 1994; McNamee & Gergen, 1999), a "participatory" stance (Shotter, 2000, p.123; 1996). The study depends, too, upon a Foucaultian understanding of power as productive power, and the particular use made of Foucaultian ideas by Rose (1989, 1991, 1998) in his exploration of the work of the psychology-derived (*psy*) disciplines, and by White (1989, 1995, 1997) in his exploration and use of poststructuralist ideas in therapy. An account of these theoretical influences will be developed in Chapters Five and Six where the story of the production of the research method is told.

Drawing on these diverse but affiliated streams in social theory, the account in this document will show this project to be a hybrid one that has been variously influenced. With post modernism has come the abandonment of belief in the explanatory power of the grand truth narratives of the modernist project. Rather, accounts are seen to be local, and situated, to hold true according to particular conditions, and to be fragmented rather than unified. My task in this account is to bring together the influences - theoretical, professional and personal - on this project and to offer a local account that makes use of diverse ideas yet establishes some coherence. But how "grand" must a local narrative be? I have found it useful to think in terms of "a provisional tactic to help us move forward rather than a grand strategy to solve all the problems and close questioning down"

(Parker, 1999b, p.2). I will not manage to close questioning down or solve all the problems of the theoretical setting, or indeed within the practice implications, of the study. As well, in accounting for my research position and practice I have not felt compelled to draw some of the theoretical boundaries drawn by those upon whose theorising I call in this study: I have used works that do not always sit in neat agreement with each other. Rather, in producing this study I have made links with a number of streams of postmodern work, finding fluidity rather than rigidity more useful to support the practice orientation I sought. This is the ethos about which Rosenbaum & Dyckman (1996) wrote: their metaphor speaks to the spirit of this study.

> In our tellings we must give self-identity boundaries. It is important, though, that these not be the rigid boundaries of penned-in lines on a political map; wars are fought over such boundaries, despite the fact that on the land itself these map lines cannot be seen smelled, heard, tasted or touched . Our boundaries must rather reflect living shores, where sea and winds constantly change the form of cliffs and cove, inlets and jutting rocks. Boundaries are always expressed in action. (1996, pp. 269-270)

And so as I account for the theoretical influences on this study, my focus is on the study's purpose of offering alternative understandings of and ways of working in the professional practice of supervision: the focus is practice. "The criterion for acceptability of a knowledge claim is the fruitfulness of its implementation" (Polkinghorne,1992, p.162): I think this position is useful in both counselling practice and in research practice.

As this chapter continues, its focus is the practice of narrative therapy with an emphasis on the central theoretical concepts that support that practice and so produced this project as an investigation of narrative approaches to counselling supervision. In describing narrative therapy I will employ a number of ways of naming the therapy. I have come to think of narrative approaches to therapy as multi-storied, and I will write of these approaches interchangeably as narrative, social constructionist, and discursive. This languaging practice reflects the changing, fluid, "living shores" (Rosenbaum & Dyckman, 1996) of these

therapeutic approaches. The ideas that produce the naming practices, *narrative, social constructionist, and discursive,* are accounted for within the descriptions of the therapy that follow in this chapter.

Social constructionism holds that speaking is always local and situated, that speaking is always from a particular position within discourse. Familiar with the practice of identifying the positions from which I am speaking, I begin the account of narrative therapy that is the focus of this chapter by locating myself in relation with what I think of as a community of practice and ideas.

Migration of professional identity

Some years before engaging with this current study I had undertaken what I now think of as a migration of professional identity. My own education in counselling had been in a programme that was eclectic and I had gone on to counsel, then supervise, and then teach, in this mode. Along the way my interest in narrative therapy grew as a result of exposure to the convincing evidence available of the "fruitfulness of its implementation" (Polkinghorne, 1992). At first I encountered this evidence in the writing, and teaching, of Michael White and David Epston (Epston, 1989; White, 1989; White & Epston, 1989), where story after story told of clients who were reasserting their own purposes for their lives, reasserting those purposes of which problems would have robbed them. Inspired by the problem-resisting interests of narrative therapists' conversations, I took into my own counselling the narrative practice of externalising conversation. These practices involve speaking with clients in ways that objectify and investigate problems rather than people. They lead to conversations that investigate the relative influence of problems over people, and people over problems; they investigate problems in terms of their histories in people's lives, their effects on people's lives, and the strategies by which problems had gained influence (White, 1989). At the same time conversations that draw out the often unnoticed influences of people over problems provide alternative stories. Together these practices call clients into authority, over problems and in the production of their own lives: I witnessed in my own day to day practice the effects for clients of speaking in these ways and the changes thus made possible as people grappled with and won their lives back from the influence of problems of various sorts.

But there is more to the work of narrative therapy than externalising conversations, and I became aware that to locate my practice in relation with the narrative metaphor would be to undertake a migration of professional identity.

The metaphor of migration of identity has been used in narrative therapy to give some sense of the work of learning new cultural practices, and the self practices those cultural practices offer, when people have made very significant changes in their lives. White (1995) first used the metaphor to story the experiences of women moving into lifestyles free of violence from lifestyles dominated by violence. Describing the experiences of those claiming back their lives from the grip of Alcohol's regime, Smith & Winslade (1997) also drew on this metaphor. To employ the same metaphor to speak of professional identity is to point to the significance of making the epistemological shift involved in taking on a social constructionist orientation in my counselling work. To accept the constructionist idea that "knowledge is not something people possess, somewhere in their heads, but rather something people do together" (Gergen, 1985, p.270) was to leave behind the modernist and romantic assumptions that had previously informed my counselling work (although I had not called them that at the time). The therapeutic and relational practices of narrative therapy were produced out of different assumptions than those that had produced my earlier counselling work. As I began to understand these differences it was clear that to implement narrative practices skilfully and ethically I needed a richer understanding of the epistemology of the practice with which I had affiliated my professional work.

Although I had purposefully chosen to extend my practice, I had not at first understood that these changes would also involve me in a migration of professional identity. Change was at first most visible at the site of my counselling practice, but I could make meaning of those experiences and take my work forward only in relation with the social theory that storied the cultural and intellectual landscape within which narrative counselling had been and was being produced. As with migrations between countries, there was a disruption of that which I might have previously taken for granted, and fine nuances of difference were at first not perceptible and then took time and work to understand. This is not necessarily problematic. In particular I do not think of the migration of

professional identity I have undertaken as a discontinuous conversion experience from a mode of practice that was in error to one that represents "the truth" about professional practice. To take such a position would be in contradiction to the postmodern assumption of multiple truths. The move I have made is one that involves both continuity and discontinuity. My professional practice has been shaped by many influences for "we cannot easily shed [...] the interpretive frameworks that we took up as our own in learning to understand and use humanist discourses not just as social scientists, but as participants in the everyday world" (Davies, 1991, p.47). The ways of thinking about and speaking of therapy and people that had been familiar continue to be available in the everyday and professional worlds around me. Nonetheless this project constitutes a public performance of my professional identity as a narrative therapist: the migration I had undertaken, and which I continue to story in my everyday practice, has made such a project possible.

Discourse and positioning and storying lives

A narrative therapist is interested in the stories and storying that shape people's lives. Describing the constructionist idea that stories about the world construct the world, Potter suggested,

> Reality enters into human practices by way of the categories and descriptions that are part of those practices. ... It [the world] is *constituted* in one way or another as people talk it, write it, and argue it. (1996, p.98)

People take on particular identities, they become the particular people they and others understand them to be, as they live out the stories they have about themselves and others have about them. Narrative therapy engages with people in making meaning: meaning is not a possession in the head (or heart) of a client and therefore to be uncovered, or in the head of the counsellor and therefore to be taught, but rather meaning has been "made together" (Gergen, 1985) in past conversations and is to be made together in the counselling conversation. This idea is of profound importance in changing the shape of therapy: once I had grasped its import I could no longer think in terms of eclectic practice but rather I moved to reinterpret familiar practices in relationship with constructionist

accounts. The ideas that knowledge is something that is "done together" and that stories are constitutive invite counsellors to pay attention not only to the stories clients tell in counselling, but also to the stories that counsellors tell *about* counselling. Stories about therapy shape counsellors' engagement with clients as surely as stories of the self shape our clients' lives.

The stories that produce our lives are those available to us in the varied cultural worlds that we inhabit. They are not the creation of each of us as individuals. This point is central to narrative therapy. White drew on the French poststructuralist work of Michel Foucault in suggesting that people are formed and shaped as we engage in the discursive practices of the cultural discourses we inhabit (White, 1989; White & Epston, 1989). Discourses offer us positions that we take up, thus producing our lives in particular ways. Foucault had paid particular attention to the institutions of the clinic and the prison, suggesting that by their practices these institutions produce modern citizens as docile bodies formed according to prescriptions of normality offered by these institutions (Foucault, 1977, 1989; Rabinow, 1984). These and other institutions shape not just those who physically inhabit them but all of us, for we are all caught up in the practices of power produced, and thus the webs of meaning woven, within discourses of health and sanity and morality and so on. Our identities are produced on the terms such discourses offer us. Our lives are shaped by disciplinary power, the power of the disciplines to produce the descriptions of normality by which we measure our lives. Narrative therapy, a discursive therapy, engages counsellors and clients in collaborative investigation of the cultural stories, the discourses, the descriptions of normality, on the terms of which our identities are shaped. For example, a narrative therapist might understand eating disorders as a manifestation of the discursive practices by which women, in particular, are called to produce their bodies according to particular cultural prescriptions. Discourses of gender and the body and health and beauty and fashion and sexuality and fitness produce the social and cultural space in which eating disorders are taken up as discursive practices, and in which eating disorders are considered to be problematic, or not.

In a discursive therapy, a counsellor engages with a client in investigating discourses and the client's positionings within those discourses as they are produced and re-produced in the accounts clients have of themselves and their lives. Together client and counsellor explore the particular cultural stories out of which the client has storied their life and their identity. This aspect of the work is known as deconstructing. Deconstructing involves rendering strange those familiar, taken for granted, meanings, practices, and assumptions that produce and are produced within discourse. Deconstructing involves the counsellor working from a stance of curiosity. They are curious firstly about the client's experiences positioned within the discourses in which the problem is produced. They learn from the client about the effects of the problem on the client's life and relationships. The counsellor is curious, too, about those sites in a client's life where the problem story does not prevail or hold so much sway. Such sites might be scarcely apparent, but in the deconstructing conversation the possibilities for their production are enhanced. For the counsellor's curiosity is not neutral: a narrative counsellor does not hold that all stories are equal. Particular cultural stories gain ascendancy: Foucault drew attention to the power/knowledge matrix by which dominant discourses determine what counts as truth and how and by whom that truth might be spoken (Rabinow, 1984). Dominant discourses are seen as having a totalising effect, offering totalising identity descriptions, such as *anorexic*. Such descriptions tend to smooth out and turn attention away from contradictions and exceptions to the stories they tell. These scarcely noticed and therefore unstoried contradictions and exceptions and resistances in the lived experience of clients are of particular interest to narrative therapists, for, made meaningful, they provide the material with which client and counsellor more richly story the client's life. "There is always a history of struggle and protest - always," asserted White (cited in Wylie, 1994), referring to those events in the client's life and history that contradict or fall outside the terms of the dominant story. White called these events "unique outcomes" (1989, p.16), suggesting that woven into a meaningful account, unique outcomes offer alternative storylines by which people can re-author their lives. Alternative stories are those stories that are constructed *beyond* the terms offered the client by a problem-saturated story: new ways of speaking and therefore of producing oneself are called upon. Re-authoring, however, is not a simple matter of replacing a problematic story with a

preferred one. for "there is no single story of life that is free of ambiguity and contradiction" (White, 1995, p.15). Rather, since lives are "multistoried" the purpose of therapeutic conversation is to position clients well to take authority, both as *knowing* about a problem in deconstruction and in expressing their own purposes for their lives. That is the work of a deconstructing therapy, recognising and working with clients in terms of lives that are multistoried, moving beyond the thin description that leaves clients positioned as stor*ied*, to thick descriptions (White, 1995) that position them as story*ing*.

In storying, people are actively negotiating the positions they get to take up in their lives, expanding the discursive positions available for taking up. The work of counselling is to expand the possibilities for a client to take up *subjective* positions as an agent who can manoeuvre for a preferred position, within discourse (always), that offers some right to speak. On these terms, a subject*ive* position is in contrast to a subject*ed* position (Drewery and Winslade, 1997). In constructionist thinking, the person taking up a subjective position is not the centred, rational, essential unitary self produced by the metaphors of modernism. Rather the self is construed as a "relational self" (Løvlie, 1992): Drewery suggested "neither individual nor social exists without the other" and that "agency is not possible except in relationship" (2001, p.324). While the term "agency" is also used in humanistic psychology, Davies reinscribed it to describe the exercise of subjectivity in constructionist terms:

> Agency is never freedom from discursive constitution of the self but the capacity to recognise that constitution and to resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted. (1991, p.51)

Storying, we are agentive in noticing and working to select the texts that we speak and are spoken by. However, some texts will always be more accessible than others, because of history, culture, gender, embodiment and the other discursive resources on which we have to call. We cannot escape the inevitability of complex relations of power, by which we might be positioned well or poorly to accomplish our purposes.

Deconstruction and the ethics of storying practices

The epistemological positions I have been describing have offered me particular ways to think about the ethics of counselling practice. For a deconstructing therapy is not only not neutral in engaging with the stories that produce clients' lives. Nor is it neutral about the stories that produce therapy. Larner offered the perspective that "deconstructing does not attack disciplines like psychotherapy from the outside *but inhabits them in a certain way*" (1999, p.50) (my emphasis). Thus counselling becomes an active negotiation for positions in relation *with*, an active attention to the ethics of one's practice and to the positions one inhabits as professional. Another description from Larner, with its sense of the productivity of deconstruction and attention to ethics, is particularly useful:

> Deconstruction articulates the paradoxes and double binds inherent in discourses of power and institution, in order to minimize their violent repression of difference and the other. (1995, p.39)

It is on this basis that narrative therapy assumes the co-production of knowledge and takes a co-authoring stance. Client knowledge is brought from the margins to the centre of the therapy, and meaning is negotiated, valuing what local knowledge and local cultural knowledges bring to the therapeutic conversation. As I have explained, it is understood that institutionalised knowledges produced within the terms of dominant discourses do not ever tell the complete story: those subjugated knowledges, represented as "stories of protest" (White, cited in Wylie, 1994), are always available when we engage with genuine curiosity in conversations intended to bring those knowledges forward.

Davies' description of a Derridean[1] approach to deconstructing adds to the understanding of deconstruction being developed here. Her description offers two points in particular. The first is to emphasise again the productivity of deconstructing: that rather than being oppositional in a static sense, it is an

---

[1] Derrida is another of the French poststructuralists writers whose deconstructive work has been called upon by theorists in this stream of social theory and by some discursive therapists (Larner, 1999, for example).

activity that is concerned with the possibility of things being other than they are, for example, in noticing in that which is present that which is absent.

> Derrida puts a cross through the word he is deconstructing in such a way as to leave the word visible, readable. The cross signals that it is still a word we need to use, as we do not know how to proceed without it. By putting it under erasure we can signal that it is problematic, in need of deconstructive work. That deconstructive work may eventually lead to the production of a different way of talking, of making sense of who we are or what we are doing. (Davies, 1998, p.139)

In narrative therapy deconstructing is a tentative process, as client and counsellor together find their ways forward. Reconstructing, re-authoring accounts are always present in deconstructive work in this therapy. As the effects of problems become more visible in externalising conversations, alternative ways of talking become available. That which was absent from the surface of a story told on the terms of the problem discourse is made present. These alternative ways of talking and making sense support clients in shaping stories about their own purposes for their lives.

Secondly, I want to draw attention of the surface of the grammar of Davies' words. For the grammar of her description throws light on constitution: deconstruct*ing* is an ongoing, negotiating in-process process, by which we produce our subjectivities. I consider that the use of the participle form, *deconstructing*, and the adjectival form, *deconstructive,* rather than the noun, deconstruction, is significant in indicating the fluid and ongoing work involved. It is an ongoing activity, attending to the ethics of living and of professional practice. This point is a critical implication of constructionist approaches to counselling and is important for this document's argument.

The therapy being described here is one that pays attention to the ethics of practice and to the politics of practice. That is not to say that that therapy is prescriptive of particular positions in relation to ethics or politics or morality, but that it engages in an ongoing process of asking and negotiating questions about

the ethics of practice. Griffith and Griffith argued that "dialogical and relational rigor" (1992, p.10) are more critical than the technicalities of questioning in this work, suggesting that therapists need to be active in choosing both epistemological positions and relational ethics. They argue that training in postmodern practice modes should include attention to selecting the epistemological positions from which therapists practice. In this way we will account not just for what we do, but also for the thinking, the epistemological position, that produces the practice.

How accounts get produced

The account of narrative therapy that I have been constructing here is a more theoretical one than I might use to introduce the therapy in a practice context. This present account has emphasised the theoretical positions that produce the therapy for these positions are central to the argument of the thesis. It would, in any case, be impossible to tell a story of narrative therapy without recourse, in some way in another, to these theoretical ideas. For a storyline that tells of the *actions* of a therapy depends upon a storyline that identifies these actions within the wider landscape of ideas within which the therapy is produced. Drawing on Bruner (1986), White (1995) suggested that the storying of lives moves backwards and forwards between two landscapes, the landscape of action and the landscape of consciousness or identity. In the movement back and forth between these landscapes, stories are layered, event upon meaning, and meaning upon event. I think of there being layers folded vertically along an horizontal plane: the telling of those aspects of story that are to do with the plot, where events are linked together, in experience, and in sequence over time (Bruner, 1986; White,1995). These events plotted on the vertical folds across the horizontal plane take place in the landscape of action, producing a storyline. Then there are the layers of story that sit above and below this horizontal plane, folding upon it horizontally, as events in the landscape of action produce personal-social meaningfulness. These layers of story are those that are narrated in the landscape of identity, layers that are to do with interpretation of events. Events in the landscape of action are thus made meaningful in terms of the work that they do in the production of identity. Storylines are thus built on the landscape of identity, too - perhaps a story of resistance or of strength - supported by a landscape of

action storyline that tells of the events that produced such descriptions. The storyline on the landscape of identity - of oneself as a person of strength for instance - then produces further opportunities for such events to recur in the future, for the storyline of *strength* will offer narrative coherence to such events. Stories are in these ways constitutive of identity. In telling a story here of narrative therapy, my emphasis has been on a storyline that emphasises what I will provisionally call the "intellectual identity" of this therapy, the ideas that produce the therapy. Narrative therapy is meaningful in the discursive context within which it was and is produced. A storying therapy, narrative therapy's 'own' story is meaningful when told in relation with the intellectual landscapes by which it has been shaped. Deconstructing involves us in an investigation of how accounts and practices have been put together as they have.

Storying lives in relationship

Before going on to introduce the question that had become pressing for my supervision and teaching practice - what does all this mean for supervision - there is one further aspect of narrative practice to which I wish to draw particular attention, for it was central to the production of this study. Narrative therapy employs a number of connection-building practices that live out the idea that identity is relational. Indeed, White wrote of the "the identification and recruitment of audiences to the preferred developments of people's lives" (1999, p.55) as a central aspect of narrative practice. Reauthoring is a collaborative practice where collaboration goes beyond the therapeutic relationship to the wider network of relationships within which lives are and have been lived. These networks of present and past relationships are purposefully identified and recruited for therapeutic purposes.

Foucault had drawn attention to the individualising and objectifying of lives and bodies in the practices of the institutions of modern Western society. Separated from others, each person is subject to the "gaze" offered by the normalising descriptions of selfhood spoken into being within the terms of dominant discourses. In this way, as individual units we police ourselves, managing ourselves according to what White described as a highly individual specification of personhood, "self-possession" and "self-containment" (1989, p.22).

Deconstructing such specifications, narrative therapists have developed a number of connection-building practices. Connection is a purposeful counter-practice to the dividing and categorising practices of the disciplines as Foucault described them. For example, in re-membering practices, those who have been significant in contributing to the production of preferred events or meanings are taken (back) into the membership of the club of a person's life (Myerhoff, 1986; White, 1997). A question such as, *Who is there who wouldn't be surprised that you have done this, who would have had faith in you, believing that you had the strength to see this through,* may well elicit the presence in the story of a person whose voice might provide another time and place in which the preferred story might be plotted and developed, so that that story might be more richly populated and thereby more richly storied. Such a person, as live or imagined audience, bears witness to that which is preferred, to their knowledge of the client's preferred qualities and ways of being and so to the alternative stories being produced. Such support might come, too, from a community of concern (Madigan & Epston, 1995) expressed through other practices, such as Epston's Anti-anorexia League. In this League those breaking free of anorexia's regime work in a team to support each other, joined by therapists, family and friends and others who support their struggle. League members join together in exposing the practices by which anorexia would have them in its grip and by which they would otherwise be cut off from each other and from others, each imprisoned in an individual cell of anorexia's construction. In this deconstructing, other actions and descriptions are made visible and enlarged and community is emphasised. Reflecting team practices (White, 1995) are another expression of practice that counters the individualising and objectifying of lives, counter practice that declares that the re-storying of lives is more than individual activity. Rather these counter practices suggest that lives are to be lived out in community, and identities storied in ways that make visible the webs of cultural and community meaning within which storying takes place and identity is produced. Identity is public and social, cultural and historical (White, 1999): the practices of narrative therapy draw attention to the relational production of identity.

Reflecting team practices

This project drew on reflecting team practice in generating its primary data. I introduce reflecting team work at this point in this account because of the importance of an understanding of both the theoretical background and the material practices of these practices. I shall return to reflecting team practice again in Chapter Four when I consider reflecting teams and supervision, and in Chapter Five when I clarify how the reflecting team process produced the data-generating processes for the study.

The antecedents of reflecting teams are the team approaches of systemic and strategic family therapy; their initial practice is attributed to Tom Andersen of Norway; but the accounts that could be given now of their development and the uses to which they have been put depend very much on the position of the speaker and are widely varied (Andersen, 1987, 1991; Davidson & Lusardi, 1991; White, 1995, 1997, 1999). And as Andersen (1995b) noted, his own accounts have shifted over time. Like narrative therapy, reflecting team practices are multi-storied.

Andersen wrote of the moment when the idea that became reflecting team practice "pushed for a birth" (1991, p.11). Familiar practice for family therapy teams was to work behind a one-way screen, invisible to and its conversations unheard by the clients. However, at Andersen's "moment of birth" the team members were made visible by the switching on of the light in the room behind the screen where they had been listening. By this move, the team members went on to make themselves, and some of the thoughts and words that they were offering to the therapeutic process, visible and audible to the clients. The clients were now in the listening and observing position that the team had been. As part of this moment of birth, the clients were, in the next move, invited to respond to the team's conversation while the team moved back out of the light. There are two aspects of Andersen's account to which I wish to draw attention. The first is the rewriting of the ethics of therapeutic relationship. Team members were no longer positioned as invisible experts, but were now visible to the family as they responded to the family's story. In this visibility there was more opportunity for their accountability to the

client family to be realised. Familiar power relations between therapy team and clients were thus disrupted, and in this disruption, deconstructed. Secondly, there is a particular emphasis to the positioning of team members in both their listening and their speaking. Andersen pointed out that the Norwegian *refleksjon* offers the sense that "something is taken in and thought about before a response is given" (1991, p.11). This captures the sense that the listening team is engaged in a responsive dialogic process: in the listening position they mull over ideas before taking up a speaking/listening position wherein together in conversation they offer their thoughts for the family's consideration. Knowledge is not a property already held in the head of an expert team member, but rather offered out of responsive reflection upon that which the client has offered. Andersen described the style of reflection a team member might offer as "appropriately unusual", neither too familiar to be not noticed, nor too different to be jarring.

White's reflecting team work has emphasised the ways in which reflecting team practices work as "definitional ceremony" as those at the centre story identity claims in community and with community (Myerhoff, 1986; White, 1995, 1997, 1999). Calling on Myerhoff's anthropological work, White described definitional ceremony as "a context for reflexive self-consciousness – in which people become more conscious of themselves as they see themselves, and more conscious of their participation in the production of their productions of their lives" (1995, p.178). Team members are positioned as witnesses to an account, a telling, to which they then contribute, in a retelling. In contributing they are positioned to honour the teller of the story, as tellings and retellings produce richer descriptions, particularly as the teller responds to the team's retellings. Like a narrative therapist, team members join with a client or family, listening with a deconstructing ear, listening for those exceptions and resistances and preferences about which they might inquire and so contribute to possible restorying or richer storying. The orientation the team brings to the reflecting team process is more important than the technical aspects of the process. White's (1995) outline of a four-stage reflecting team process is one that I have found helpful. I have used it as a guide for reflecting team work in therapy and it informed this project. White (1999) also drew some particular distinctions about this work. He wrote of reflecting team work as involving "practices of acknowledgement", noting the

differences between these practices and practices of applause. Practises of applause, he suggested, are at risk in therapeutic settings of reproducing normalising judgement because of the power relations of the therapeutic relationship. Practices of acknowledgement, however, are "more considered, thoughtful and more specific in that they are expressed in ways that are unique to the events that they refer to" (p.69). Going on to describe the differences between conversation and monologue and the importance of team members supporting each other to engage in "decentred sharing", White suggested

> To embody one's interest in other people's lives is to situate this interest in the context of those people's expressions, in the context of one's own lived experience, in the context of one's imagination and curiosity, or in the context of one's purposes. (1999, p.72)

In situating their responses in this way team members stand apart from those positions offered by discourses of normalising judgement. A further strategy White offered reflecting team practice is to "engage in explorations of the history of thought and practice in the culture of therapy", that is to take a deconstructing position in relation to therapy itself. In this way team members are well positioned to produce what Kaye called "a non-regulative praxis", that is "to get outside particularly disciplinary discourses in order to question their (and our) practices of power" (1999, p.35).

There are two further features of reflecting team work that I wish to point to in particular as I end the current description of reflecting team practice, for these aspects of practice are ones I shall return to through this document. The first is the involvement of multiple voices, the bringing forward a sense of a community of speakers offering many possible ways of speaking. Not only does the speaking of many voices interrupt the more familiar private dialogic encounter of therapy, it also disturbs the authority of the *psy* profession's univocal prescriptions for ways of living based on expert knowledge. The disturbance of expert knowledge thus enhances clients' appreciation of there being many possible ways of living well. The Russian literary theorist Bakhtin (1981) distinguished between ways of speaking that are "authoritative" and those that are "dialogised". The latter ways

of speaking have had their authority investigated. In reflecting team work the team is heard, in the second phase of the process, transparently negotiating together the making up of knowledge and the ideas that sit behind the making up. Smith, Yoshioka and Winton's (1993) study of clients' experiences of reflecting team practice suggested that clients found it helpful when the contributions of team members offered multiple descriptions, and when those different descriptions were each located in "credible explanations" (p.40). When professional knowledge is situated, and is brought forward by many voices that can sustain the possibility of there being different accounts, the ethics of professional relationships are differently produced. The second feature of reflecting team work to which I draw attention here also involves the interruption of dialogue. The listening position, which the client takes up in Phase Two, offers the person consulting the team space to reflect, to listen without having to produce immediate response. The physical repositioning offers an opportunity for the client to listen to and reflect upon and thus produce accounts that might generate possible alternative discursive positionings. Listening to the team's tentative inquiries and responses, the client is better positioned to reflect on and evaluate those accounts and their usefulness to them in storying their lives. In Phase Three the ethic of positioning the client as "senior author" (White, 1995) is enacted as the client is consulted about their responses to the team's reflections. The practices described here are those by which White (1999) differentiates these particular approaches to reflecting team practice as poststructuralist for he demonstrates particular interest in practices of power and the work of deconstruction.

Some questions for supervision

When counselling is made up in the ways I have been describing here, what are the implications for counsellor supervision? This question had become pressing for me and generated this research project. The migration of professional identity that I had undertaken as a counsellor came to have significant implications for how I understood and practised supervision. Questions were raised both for the moment by moment practice of particular supervision relationships and for the work of supervision in the professional culture in which I was practising. In Chapter One I outlined the interrogation I brought to supervision in employing the

theoretical tools of discourse and positioning. I think of those questions as *researcher questions*, produced as I positioned myself more purposefully in research discourse. The beginnings of those questions, however, were in practitioner inquiry. They arose as I thought about practice and the ideas that produced practice. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the *practitioner questions* that narrative counselling produced for me as a counsellor, supervisor and counsellor educator.

If the stories people tell about themselves are constituting of their lives and their lived identities and relationships, so the stories we tell about our professional practices are constituting of our professional lives and the professional identities that we live and of our professional relationships. What does this mean, then, for how counsellors and supervisors work together in supervision? What does it mean for the accounts our profession gives of supervision? If we are to pay attention to the ways so-called truths about persons and social practices and institutions are constructed, then what truths about professional supervision practice might we also pay attention to? And what truths about counselling practice do we pay attention to in supervision? If we are working "towards a non-regulative praxis" (Kaye, 1999) in counselling, what does that mean for supervision, when the profession construes supervision as regulatory? These questions all engage with a matter of much interest in the supervision literature, to which Chapters Three and Four attend, of the connections and differences between counselling and supervision. While there are a number of ways that discussion of such differences and similarities are theorised - for example in employing the idea of isomorphism (White & Russell, 1997) - I want to emphasise here a similarity based on the ethics of relationship.

Questions about the ethics of relationship were central to this inquiry. In what ways do the power relations of professional practice necessarily produce supervision and counselling differently whatever my chosen epistemological stance in therapy, I asked. Does counsellor privilege in the power relation of counselling mean that the work of counsellor and supervisor in supervision is produced out of a different ethical relation than that which produces the counselling relationship? Does the power relation of counselling require

supervisors to take on a scrutiny in supervision that narrative therapists repudiate in counselling?

If it is the case that counsellors should be subject to normalising judgement because of the power relations of professional practice, what are the effects on counsellors and on supervisors and on the supervision relationship of a climate of regulation and self-scrutiny? How might counsellors both be responsive (responsibly) to the power-in-relation of our positioning as counsellors-with-clients, *and* responsive (deconstructively) to our positionings as ordinary persons living in the same world (of normalising judgement) as our clients? When does responsible professional reflection become problematic self-scrutiny and how would we know?

Narrative counselling conversations are possibility-generating for clients when counsellors bring a stance of inquiry and curiosity. What happens if we approach supervision on those terms? If counselling conversations pay attention to the terms on which clients story their lives, what happens in supervision conversations engaged with on the same terms? What supervision practices might be opened up, if we move outside the already available ways?

These were some of the questions about supervision that resonated with me as I became more familiar with a narrative orientation in counselling. What does the narrative metaphor offer the professional practice of supervision? One possibility that I had encountered was supervision as a didactic process of the supervisor teaching or instructing a counsellor, by telling them the kinds of questions they could be asking in a particular situation: after all, the practices associated with the narrative metaphor depend on a sophisticated set of practice skills. However, it seemed to me that such an approach did not make use of the breadth of possibilities that the narrative metaphor offered for how supervision might be produced. For one thing, there are problems with limiting supervision to a training focus. But more significantly, on the basis that narrative therapy is distinguished by a concern with the ethics of practice and the constructionist attention to the terms of knowledge production, I was interested to think about a supervision premised on the same concerns. How might the ethics of relationship

offered in narrative therapy – an ethics of collaboration, the ethic of attending to the accounts available to produce identity, the ethics of attending to practices of power - be productive of ethical practice in supervision? And what might be particular to a local, New Zealand version of supervision?

Adopting the tactic of assuming that supervision could be investigated on the terms that produced deconstructing approaches in counselling, I asked how supervision might be thus transformed. Larner has suggested that

> Deconstructing psychotherapy takes place at the level of *practice*, where it addresses issues of power, justice and ethics in relation to clients, and at the level of *theory*, where it deconstructs its own power and authority as an institution of psychotherapy. (1999, p.41)

At the level of practice, and of theory, supervision might be similarly described. In arguing a connection between narrative approaches to counselling on one hand and supervision on the other, I remain mindful of the professional literature that distinguishes counselling and supervision. "*Supervision is not therapy,*" asserted Garner, Bobele, and Biever (1997, p.224, original emphasis). My purpose here is not to conflate the two practices, supervision and counselling. Rather I am interested in producing approaches to supervision that attend to matters of power, justice, ethics in counselling practice and theory and in supervision practice and theory. The narrative therapy literature provides a more developed storyline to support this project, I believe, than the supervision literature, for it is the narrative therapy literature that consistently pays attention to the ethics of relational practices. Nonetheless, this project is not produced independently of the supervision literature and mainstream supervision practice: it is in the spaces between narrative therapy and supervision that this project is produced. Again, it is Larner's description of deconstructing psychotherapy that speaks to what I sought for this project in relation with the institution of supervision.

> A deconstructing psychotherapy is ultimately open-ended, manifold, simultaneously inventing new approaches to psychotherapy while deferring to its tradition. To think within a tradition is to ask questions

> previously unasked and unthought within it, to challenge its canon of discourse, to open it up to other ways of thinking and speaking as questions that make a difference [Gasche, 1994]. (Larner, 1999, p.51)

And so it is to the supervision literature that this current account now turns, discussing the traditions within which this project is located and beginning to open up its canon of discourse to the ways of thinking and speaking that the narrative metaphor offers.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has located this project in terms of social theory. It has also located this work in my own professional life as an ongoing engagement with the implications for theory and practice of the narrative metaphor. This engagement was produced as a result of a migration of professional identity. The chapter has described the narrative metaphor as proposing that stories are constitutive, and that people encounter problems in their lives when they have been sidelined from the production of the stories by which their lives are constituted. Storying is understood to be social and relational. Narrative therapists work to engage collaboratively with clients in generating dialogue within which clients might position themselves more favourably as agents in their lives. Such dialogue is a discursive production as the terms available for storying lives are investigated through deconstructing. The chapter has suggested that deconstructing therapy pays attention not only to the making up of knowledges within clients' lives, but also to the making up of knowledges about clients' lives and also about therapy. Questions of relations of power and of ethical relationship are shown to be central to the practice of deconstructing therapy. The chapter has drawn attention to the terms upon which this investigation of the implications of the narrative metaphor for supervision has depended.

Chapter Three

An introduction to supervision, the professional context of the study

My purpose in this thesis is to produce an account of supervision in the spaces between narrative therapy and traditional or mainstream supervision. Having introduced narrative therapies, I now turn to the supervision literature. This chapter surveys the institution of supervision, outlining the mainstream literature that has influenced my understandings of supervision. The review in this chapter is not all-encompassing. It canvasses in particular the supervision literature that has been taken into New Zealand settings: I rely on my own professional experiences for the assumptions I make in this selection. I believe that knowledge and practice in New Zealand have been more influenced by practitioners and practice-based supervision texts and models (mostly U.K.) than by research-based material (mostly U.S.A.). Over the next two chapters I also consider those contributions that have been useful to me in taking a deconstructing approach to supervision and thus in storying supervision otherwise.

The chapter begins with a description of key aspects of counselling supervision and goes on to focus on the monitoring function of supervision and the implications of that function for the exercise of responsibility. Supervision is then distinguished from consultation and from counselling. Four explanatory metaphors of supervision are then investigated: counselling-linked approaches, social role accounts, developmental accounts, and generic approaches to supervision. I begin to locate my own preference for a postmodern, narrative-informed approach to supervision in this investigation. I then engage in a deconstructing reading of the supervision relationship. In this examination I suggest that the supervision relationship has been unilaterally constructed, thus positioning the counsellor somewhat disadvantageously for the exercise of ethical responsibility.

Supervision: an introduction

In the context of counselling in New Zealand, supervision is a process of critical reflection where a supervisor and a counsellor share responsibility for "monitoring, developing and supporting" the counsellor in their work (NZAC Code of Supervision, NZAC Handbook, 2000, p.27). Regular supervision for all Members is mandated in the New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Code of Ethics (2000); supervision is considered to be critical in counsellors maintaining effective and ethical practice. Brigid Proctor, whose U.K. work is familiar in New Zealand as a result of her teaching visits (and, I suspect, the accessibility of her material) speaks of this as the "quality assurance" purpose of supervision (Proctor, 1995).

In my work in counsellor education I have often referred to Inskipp and Proctor's (1994) description of supervision:

> ...a working alliance between a supervisor and a counsellor (or counsellors) in which the counsellor can offer an account or recording of her work; reflect on it; receive feedback and where appropriate guidance. The object of the alliance is to enable the counsellor to gain in ethical competence, confidence and creativity so as to give her best possible service to her clients. (p.1)

I have used this description because it seems to me to focus clearly on key aspects of the supervision task. Each of the themes raised here will be elaborated further as this work continues, but at this point I want to pause and highlight certain elements. Initially attention is given to the relational aspect of supervision, *a working alliance between a supervisor and a counsellor*, and then to the work each does. The counsellor will *offer an account,* and will *reflect* on their work, while the supervisor will provide *feedback* and perhaps *guidance.* There is a mutual concern with the *ethics* of the counsellor's practice, with enhancing practice through building *confidence* and *creativity* in the counsellor. The focus of supervision is on promoting the counsellor's *service to clients.*

There are, however, three particular significant aspects of supervision that the Inskipp and Proctor excerpt does not directly encompass that are central to the situation and the argument of this thesis. The first two of these are the interrelated matters of monitoring and responsibility. The third is the matter of distinguishing between supervision and counselling, consultation, or training.

Quality assurance and monitoring in supervision

The terms used in the NZAC Code of Ethics to describe the focus of supervision are "monitoring, developing and supporting" (p.27) and locally many counsellors are familiar with Proctor's (1987) classification of the "normative, formative, and restorative" functions of supervision. Some writers have suggested that there is a conflict of interest between the evaluative and the facilitative purposes of supervision. Mearns (1995) contrasted the "nutritious" and "policing" functions of supervision. Shipton, another U.K. writer, referred to "the tensions between a predatory gaze and respectful regard" (1997, p.145). Locally, Manthei (1996) made the case for the monitoring function of supervision to be made explicit since, he contended, it is present whether it is explicit or not. In the U.S. literature Deck and Morrow (1989) suggested that "support and confrontation" (p.38) must go together, while Bradley suggested that evaluation in supervision was "never intended to be fearful", but rather to proactively address an "accountability question" about the accomplishment of counsellor objectives (1989, p.25). Carroll (1996) noted that there was no agreement amongst professional counsellors in the U.K. about formal evaluation as a critical task of supervision.

There is considerable ambiguity about the extent to which, and the ways in which, supervision fulfils a monitoring function, particularly in the U.K. and New Zealand contexts where supervisor responsibility is not codified in law or in counsellor licensing regulations. For example, King and Wheeler's (1999) U.K. study suggested that it is unclear the extent to which supervisors carry responsibility, in legal, ethical, moral and practical terms, for the work of the counsellors with whom they share supervision. They suggested that "the notion that all casework is monitored by an experienced and qualified colleague is a fantasy, not a reality" (p.227), tentatively concluding that professional associations might provide more formally delineated and prescriptive codes of

ethics and practice. Without such moves, King and Wheeler suggested, it would need to be accepted that supervision does not provide quality assurance. At the same time supervision works to shore up the claim of our profession that counsellors are responsible and ethical workers. However, there is nothing in the British Association of Counselling (BAC) Codes or the NZAC Codes to suggest that supervision should involve a "casework" approach to monitoring. Supervision is clearly a term that encompasses a wide range of interpretations.

Paying attention to how monitoring is written about, I notice the wording in the NZAC Code of Ethics: "Counsellors shall monitor their work through regular supervision...". I argue that it is significant that the subject of the sentence is *counsellors* (Crocket, 1999): the surface of the grammar of this sentence suggests that the monitoring responsibility rests with the counsellor. Similarly the BAC Code of Ethics and Practice for Supervisors of Counsellors states that "counselling supervision provides supervisees with an opportunity on a regular basis to discuss and monitor their work with clients" (1996, 3.1). By both these accounts monitoring does not centre on the supervisor. Rather, these accounts offer the possibility that supervision provides a forum where a counsellor engages with a supervisor in a process of quality assurance in respect of their work. The NZAC Code states, too, that "Counsellors are responsible for their work with clients..." (NZAC Handbook, 2000, p. 28). The BAC Code of Ethics and Practice for Supervisors of Counsellors states

> Within this contract supervisors are responsible for helping supervisees to reflect critically upon their work, while at the same time acknowledging that clinical responsibility remains with the counsellor. (1996, B.1.2)

The NZAC and BAC positions are in contrast with the very full responsibilities, professionally and legally prescribed, of North American supervisors whose responsibilities were described by Borders and Leddick:

> You [the supervisor] are responsible for both a counselor and that counselor's clients, for the counselor's learning and the counselor's welfare. (1987, p.2)

The emphasis of this excerpt is on very wide-ranging supervisor responsibility. Its place in a handbook on counselling supervision published by the American Counselling Association gives such a statement considerable authority as it constructs supervisor responsibility as all-encompassing. This 1987 work remains current. Whether the counsellor (NZAC, BAC) or the supervisor (ACA) is responsible for clients has a significant effect on how the supervision relationship might be produced. If counsellors are responsible both for their clients and for monitoring their counselling work in supervision, they are positioned differently than if their supervisor is responsible and if their supervisor is to do the monitoring. The NZAC and BAC positions might work to call counsellors into responsibility for their practice and in supervision in ways that the ACA position does not. For there is significantly less room for counsellor responsibility or mutual responsibility within the construction of responsibility produced by the Borders and Leddick description. That description gives responsibility solely to the supervisor. The discourse of supervisor responsibility is pervasive, influential even in those professional contexts where it is not explicitly espoused, despite ambiguities, and contrasting descriptions such as those offered in the BAC and NZAC Codes.

The discourse of supervisor responsibility is a central interest of this project. Within the terms of this discourse, an agentive position as *responsible professional* is clearly formed and readily available for the supervisor: that position is thickly described. However, the position of *counsellor* as an agentive *responsible professional* is scarcely formed. Discourses have effects (Davies, 1998); they produce particular vocabularies of action (Gergen, 1996, p.22). A thinly described and scarcely formed position of counsellor responsibility produces a sparse vocabulary of action by which counsellors might produce themselves as responsible for their own ethical practice. Yet surely that is the purpose of supervision: to produce counsellors who are responsible for their own ethical practice. I draw attention to the surface of the grammar of statements from the NZAC Codes. I do this to begin to describe more richly the relational responsibility that might be exercised in supervision when counsellors are present in the subject position in sentences about responsibility: *Counsellors shall*

monitor their work... For I argue that if counsellors are to be well positioned to exercise ethical responsibility in their work it is of considerable importance that supervision is taken beyond the vocabularies of action offered by the discourse of supervisor responsibility.

Distinguishing supervision

Those seeking to describe supervision and its tasks have also worked to distinguish it from other activities such as consultation and counselling, and to distinguish counselling supervision from managerial supervision. There is general agreement across the international literature that supervision is distinguished from consultation by the ongoing commitment involved in supervision, and that supervisors take more responsibility than consultants whether that responsibility is unilateral or shared (for example, Barretta-Herman, 2001; Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Todd & Storm, 1997b). There have been some efforts to clarify usage of the term 'supervision' and in some cases to introduce a new vocabulary, such as consultation, facilitation, mentoring, co-vision, metavision or peervision in order to distinguish counselling supervision from the managerial and overseeing implications generally associated with supervision (for example, Edwards 1997; Lambert, 1989/90; Todd & Storm, 1997b, Wendorf, 1984). However, I continue to use the term 'supervision' as I believe we have no better word at present to convey the commitment that both counsellor and supervisor bring to the task of collaborating in the production of the counsellor as an ethical and effective worker with their clients and in their professional life. I think, too, that supervision can be re-inscribed when the emphasis moves from *over*sight by the supervisor to the counsellor seeing their work from a number of different positions (Roberts, 1997). These positions enable counsellors to look over their work in collaboration with the colleague who is the supervisor. This emphasis points again to the significance of how we understand the positioning of counsellor and supervisor in relation. For this emphasis positions the supervisor as the facilitator of the counsellor's looking around their work: the supervisor's responsibility is exercised through the skill they bring to the task of facilitation rather than to the task of providing unilateral oversight. Then, supervision is distinguished from consultation by the commitment of the supervisor and counsellor to work together

in an ongoing professional relationship with a collaborative focus on ethical counselling practice.

Arguments for making clear distinctions between counselling and supervision are particularly significant for this study. The thesis of this document is in tension with current trends in the mainstream supervision literature to regard supervision as a practice that is quite distinct from counselling practice (Carroll, 1996; Holloway, 1995; McConkey, 1999). Arguments for making a clear distinction between counselling and supervision have taken two forms. The first, focussing on the *content* of supervision, suggests that the focus is client work, "the therapeutic relationship the supervisee has with the client" (Gardener, Bobele, & Biever, 1997, p.225). Thus, clear distinctions between 'personal' and 'professional' are called for. For a supervisor to provide therapy that has "broader goals" than "helping supervisees become more effective with clients" is not ethical, according to Bernard and Goodyear (1998, p.7). Kaiser wrote in terms of the "'therapising' [of] the supervisee" being a risk when a supervisor does not make a clear distinction between personal awareness that is in the "interest of the [therapy] work", and that which focuses on the "personal growth of the supervisee" [1992, p.293]. These authors made these claims on the basis of the evaluative task the supervisor has and the quality assurance function of supervision: given the supervisor's responsibility for ensuring safe practice, the argument goes, it is unethical for this responsibility to be further complicated by the power relation of therapy, for that would position the counsellor in an inappropriately vulnerable position. However, Bernard and Goodyear do not give guidance about determining what falls within the bounds of helping counsellors become more effective with their clients. My observation is that the family therapy literature in general more sharply distinguishes professional supervision from personal counselling whereas humanistic counselling approaches are more sympathetic to a sense of a blurring and overlap between the person of the counsellor and the client work. Tomm (1993) questioned the sharp distinctions drawn in family therapy in North America, suggesting that dual relationships can be enriching if the power relations are managed well and where they are transparent.

The second form of the distinction between supervision and counselling is of more recent origin. It argues that supervision is to be regarded as a speciality that is distinct from counselling (Carroll, 1996; McConkey, 1999), involving a separate set of knowledges and practices (Todd & Storm, 1997b) acquired through a distinct training. Supervision is educative; its process is not allied with counselling. To conceive of supervision as a professional specialisation in its own right is in contrast to the practice history in the U.K. and New Zealand, where counsellors have tended simply to follow on into roles as supervisors by virtue of their experience and skill in counselling with no particular further professional preparation or training. Both McConkey (1999), in New Zealand, and Carroll (1996), in the U.K, advocated strongly for the specialised training of supervisors arguing that such a move is another step in the counselling profession's maturity.

The arguments Carroll and McConkey made for supervision as a professional speciality are produced on the terms of metaphors that construct supervision in particular ways. If supervision as a specialisation is a step in the profession's maturity, the history that has led us to this point is relevant. Particular explanatory metaphors of supervision have held the centre ground at different times in the history of supervision, drawing attention to different aspects of the supervision process and conceptualising supervision in different ways. The chapter continues with an overview of this history, emphasising four major explanatory metaphors of supervision and their influence on the accounts that are current.

Explanatory metaphors of supervision

Psychoanalysis: supervision as training but not as therapy

The practice of supervision was developed as a training function. Early in the twentieth century a division arose in psychoanalytic circles in Europe and the U.K. One approach favoured training and personal analysis being undertaken with the same analyst while the other distinguished training in the skills of analysis and the personal therapy required to hone one's capabilities to work as an analyst. This division lives on as the therapy field works to distinguish between what Edwards characterised as "learning about their own feelings as opposed to

learning about therapeutic techniques and strategies" (1997, p.11). I have already pointed to the current relevance of this distinction. However, this phase of supervision history also raises the question of whether training and supervision are synonymous. More recently Carroll (1996) suggested that training supervision (of students of counselling) be distinguished from consultative supervision (of qualified counsellors). For the most part the literature does not distinguish between supervision and training in this way (Holloway, 1996; Merl, 1995; Santa Rita, 1998, for example). Indeed, much of the literature assumes a training focus without making that overt, thus conflating training and supervision. Again, the NZAC Code of Supervision offers evidence of efforts in the local profession to distinguish supervision and training. The Code lists four aspects of practice that supervision *is* concerned with and in a separate clause it suggests that "supervision may also be concerned with" training. This use of the subjunctive is not accidental but reflects the strong sense of the Association's Annual General Meeting when this Code was adopted that supervision and training should be distinguished.

Counselling model-related approaches

Psychoanalysis produced a psychoanalytic version of supervision, one that theorised supervision on the same terms as it theorised therapy. Then, beginning in the 1950s, a number of counselling-linked approaches to supervision were produced alongside the invention of new models of therapy, such as Transactional Analysis (Carroll, 1996). In this way a clusters of approaches to supervision were produced, approaches that sat and sit alongside particular orientations to counselling practice. The counselling model is assumed to work as a supervision model; the same practices will be employed in supervision as in counselling. Thus a supervisor working from a person-centred supervision model works on the basis of trust in a counsellor's capacity for growth just as a person-centred counsellor works on the basis of trust in a client's capacity for growth, "believing in the phenomenological process to such an extent that the wisdom of giving advice or instruction becomes a moot issue" (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998, p.19).

Similarly as family therapy developed, particular supervision practices emerged in that field, too. Supervision was most often live supervision during therapy, in the

context of a team. It focussed particularly on the client work, paying little attention to the person of the therapist. "It is being discovered that a theory of therapy and a theory of training are synonymous," Haley suggested (1976, p.170). In family therapy the notion of isomorphism has been used rather freely to describe the interconnection, the "reciprocal and recursive relationship" (Liddle & Saba, 1983, p.4) between therapy and training/supervision. While Liddle and Saba noted that the concept of isomorphism drew attention to "what is similar between domains that are different" (p.9), they also warned that the isomorphic transformation should not be taken too literally nor over-emphasised. Four expressions of the notion of isomorphism were noted by White and Russell (1997). Firstly, by applying the psychodynamic concept of parallel process to systemic work, isomorphism is understood to be the replication of patterns of interaction between therapy and supervision. Secondly there is the assumption that "therapeutic models, principles and practices can be translated into the supervisory domain" (p.317). The third application of isomorphism assumes that while the content of therapy and supervision are different, the structure and process are similar. Lastly, White and Russell identified an emphasis on interventive stance: "one can alter the sequence in supervision with the goal of altering the supervisee's in-session behaviour accordingly" (p.317). They suggested that when the concept of isomorphism is applied authors should specify which of these understandings they are assuming, and that the limits of the term should be specified in order not to blur the distinctions between therapy and supervision (p.329).

> Given the elemental differences in these two domains of practice, the use of the term [isomorphism] should neither facilitate inappropriate borrowing of therapeutic terms into supervision nor negate important distinctions between the two activities. (White & Russell, 1997, p.330)

Nonetheless, the structural concept of isomorphism continues to be widely used: "within family therapy, the isomorphic structure of the supervisory relationship continues to be the most acceptable metaphor for understanding training and development" (Santa Rita, 1998, p.129).

In counselling, counselling model-related supervision approaches have fallen out of fashion over the past decade in particular. As I have indicated, the trend has been towards generic approaches (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Carroll, 1996; Holloway, 1995). Those arguing for this trend have described counselling model-related approaches in rather pejorative language. Carroll, reporting on his major U.K. supervision study, used Holloway's phrase of "counselling-bound" (p.24) and reported that Holloway had used the descriptor "parochial" about such approaches. He also described such approaches as "narrow". Carroll wrote of a struggle to "wean" (p.7) supervision from counselling, suggesting that supervision is at "an adolescent stage of development", "poised for independence" (p.28). The infusion of a developmental metaphor works to suggest that the field is mature when we accept that supervision is a profession in its own right, separate from counselling: mature supervision practice will work independently of models of counselling.

As I have noted, descriptions of counselling-modality-linked models of supervision as "counselling bound" work in two ways. Firstly, both Holloway and Carroll were describing and arguing against supervision taking an alignment with a particular counselling orientation. Secondly they were preferring to conceptualise supervision as a generic activity that is a speciality in its own right, and one that requires a specific training, not just counsellor training. On these terms supervision is a very different activity from counselling, separated twice over. Holloway (1995) pointed out that research suggested that supervisors do not practice supervision as they do counselling. Supervisors are more likely to take up a teaching orientation and to give advice, for example. Holloway, Freund, Gardner, Nelson, and Walker (1989) studied observable differences in supervisory style of a number of major theorists. They conducted their study by watching videos of these theorists and coding and comparing their responses according to particular categories. On the basis of these observations, Holloway et al. suggested that the particular model developed for supervision, Interpersonal Process Recall, rather than those models adapted from counselling, perhaps enabled a more "equitable and consultant-like" working relationship in supervision (p.101). Their analysis of the videotape featuring Carl Rogers, for example, suggested that "client-centred supervision does not comply with the

theoretical tenets of a client-centred counselling approach" (p.98), since advice-giving featured in Rogers' supervision work in ways unfamiliar in his counselling.

Other voices have contributed to this shift away from counselling-related approaches to supervision. Across the theoretical spectrum there is interest in distinguishing between counselling and supervision, in terms of both process and purpose. Bernard and Goodyear (1998), in their overview supervision text, acknowledged the similarities between counselling and supervision, while arguing for "specific preparation" (p.4) for the tasks of supervision, largely on the basis that supervision requires one primarily to be a good *educator*: the skills required of the supervisor are the skills of education, rather than those of counselling. Editing a psychoanalytic collection, Shipton suggested that "supervision occupies a different space from therapy but it cannot be understood without being contrasted to it" (1997, p.144). Haber (1996) offered an integrative, multi-modal account of supervision, tracing his own professional lineage through a range of models of therapy. Writing in the context of postmodern family therapy, Gardner, Bobele, and Biever suggested that the proposal made by some writers that supervision is an isomorph of counselling does not hold up because "*supervision is not therapy*" (1997, p.224, original emphasis). They suggested that while both practices aim at change the goals are different: that in postmodern supervision the focus is the therapeutic relationship rather than the person of the counsellor. They argued, too, that while in postmodern therapy there is an assumption that clients are experts on their own lives, there is not the assumption in supervision that counsellors are experts on therapy. This latter point is echoed by Bernard and Goodyear (1998), who suggested in their summary of narrative supervision that trainees are just beginning to develop stories of "self-as-professional" while clients have well developed stories (p.22). I shall return to this point and critique it. However, I include it here as it contributes to the production of an account of supervision as a speciality, a separate profession even, that is distinct from counselling. By that account supervision involves a separate set of knowledges and practices (Carroll, 1996; McConkey, 1999; Todd & Storm, 1997b). In process and purpose, by this account, counselling and supervision differ. By this argument, counselling-model related models of supervision are no longer adequate.

Before locating this present study in relation with the trend away from counselling-model related approaches to supervision, I consider other phases in the history of supervision.

Social role accounts

Those accounts generally characterised in the supervision literature as social role models of supervision assume that we can talk about supervision by focusing on the roles the supervisor plays. The early work of Bernard (1979) suggested that the work of supervision is done through the roles of teaching, consulting, and counselling. The influence of this work continues to be visible in more recent work, albeit at times in the background (see Lowe & Guy, 1996, for example.) Kadushin (1976) named the functions of supervision (in social work) as managerial, educative, and supportive. Significantly, later work (Bradley, 1989, for example) adds evaluation to the list of supervision functions. Some contemporary accounts (Baretta-Herman, 2001, for example) continue to draw on and develop these early social role accounts, accounts that focus on the *tasks* and *functions* of supervision and on the roles that supervisors take on in the performance of these tasks as they lead the work of supervision. Social role accounts thus come out of a supervisor-focus. I will go on to argue in this chapter that this supervisor focus is a problematic aspect of these and other accounts of supervision.

Developmental accounts

The developmental metaphor has been particularly pervasive in supervision, having occupied the centre ground of U.S. supervision writing in the 1980s when a number of developmental models of supervision were proposed. Developmental accounts focus on the characteristics of counsellors in training and licensing processes as they progress from, as it is characterised in the developmental literature, neophyte to master counsellor. Developmental models describe typical trainee stages and the characteristics of trainees at those stages. On the basis of these descriptions a supervisor then assesses and makes appropriate interventions to facilitate counsellor progression between stages towards mature practice. Developmental models were proposed by Littrell, Lee-Borden, and Lorenz

(1979), Stoltenberg (1981), Loganbill, Hardy, and Delworth (1982), Blocher (1983), Stoltenberg and Delworth (1987). Loganbill et al.'s work was perhaps the most widely used of these resources in New Zealand: it was the central resource both in my university counsellor education programme and in my first counselling position in the Vocational Guidance Service. Drawing on developmental theory, Loganbill et al. proposed a three stage model: stagnation, confusion and integration. A counsellor might be assessed as functioning at any one of these stages, or in transition between them, in respect of eight aspects of practice: competence, emotional awareness, autonomy, identity, respect for individual difference, purpose and direction, personal motivation, and ethics. The supervisor might then call on a range of strategies: facilitative, conceptual , confrontive, prescriptive and catalytic interventions (p.32). This rather complex model has the advantage of conceptualising developmental stage across multiple areas of practice, thereby unsettling assumptions about linear developmental progression: a counsellor might be assumed to be at a stage of confusion regarding personal motivation while at integration in terms of respect for individual differences, for example.

Developmental models were described by Bernard and Goodyear as "intuitively appealing" (1998, p.26): we take it for granted that there is a progression towards greater professional competence over time and with experience. However, they suggested, this intuitive appeal may lead to other accounts of supervision being overlooked. Holloway (1987), too, warned that the attractiveness of developmental models might distract the profession from rigorous investigation of those models and from investigation of alternative metaphors. She had suggested that developmental models emerged because of the inadequacy of clinical counselling models in explaining supervision and became "the zeitgeist of supervision thinking and research" (p.209) in the 1980s. However, she urged more caution about developmental models and more investigation of alternatives such as learning theory: teaching was one of the roles Bernard (1979) had described. In drawing attention to learning theory Holloway foreshadowed the emphasis of Carroll and others in the 1990s on an educational model of supervision. Worthington (1987) also pointed out deficiencies in developmental models, mentioning the lack of detail, of specificity of skills at various stages, and

of attention to the person of the supervisor, as well as a focus on stage, rather than on transitions between stages. Friedlander and Snyder's study of groups of trainee counsellors at various stages suggested that "individual differences override level of experience" (1983, p.348). Writing about postmodern models of family therapy supervision, Gardner et al (1997) noted the constraints and limitations of the descriptions of trainees at particular stages of development and of the modernist practice of grouping counsellors in supervision groups in terms of developmental level. The postmodern critique of general developmental theory offers support for Gardner et al.'s concern: this critique focuses on the individualising processes of developmental schema, and the impetus they provide for description to become normative and prescriptive and for their terms of reference to be naturalised (Burman, 1994). As well, the concern is supported by research findings that the developmental assumption of increased supervisory collegiality over the length of a supervisory relationship held true only for male counsellors (Granello, Beamish, & Davis, 1997). Clearly the "intuitive appeal" of the developmental metaphor also disguises some of its deficiencies.

Despite critiques, however, the developmental metaphor continues to infuse much of the supervision literature. The metaphor of developmental progression is pervasive in everyday supervision talk - it has been naturalised - and in the literature. Some of its effects will be investigated further as this chapter continues, and in Chapter Four.

Generic models

The history of supervision has seen some general phases in which particular metaphors of supervision have been dominant: counselling model-related approaches, social role accounts, and developmental accounts. A fourth cluster has been predominant in counselling in the 1990s, these more recent accounts suggesting that other metaphors fail to explain or contain the professional practice of supervision and that broader accounts are needed. These generic accounts, offering what Holloway calls "the big picture" (1995, p.6) drew in particular on social role models. Holloway's and Carroll's combined and individual work exemplifies this fourth and important cluster of approaches. With their trans-Atlantic collaboration, their work is both influential and well regarded.

Holloway's (1995) systems approach was derived from the dimensions of supervision that she saw as having arisen from "empirical, conceptual and practice knowledge bases of supervision" (p.7). Her model has at its centre the supervision relationship. Around that central core factor she placed other aspects of the supervisory system: the four *contextual* factors of the client, the trainee, the supervisor and the institution, along with two further factors, the *tasks* of supervision and the *functions* of supervision. Holloway's emphasis was on supervision as an instructional process. Holloway and Poulin suggested that

> Supervision is an instructional method that finds its origins in the apprenticeship approach to learning an art or a craft. (1995, p.245)

Supervision thus is taken to involve a unidirectional transfer of knowledge from senior practitioner to a counsellor constructed in a more junior position as learner. Carroll advocated for an educational model: "education is more at the heart of supervision than counselling" (1996, p.27). He suggested that his model was "generic and integrative", connecting "the goals and purposes of supervision to the function and tasks/roles" (p.44). He described seven "generic" tasks of supervision: creating the learning relationship, the teaching task, the counselling task, monitoring professional/ethical issues, the evaluating task, the consultative task, the administrative task. A further argument Carroll made for a generic approach to supervision contrasted these multiple supervisor roles with the single roles supervisors tend to take up, he suggested, in "counselling-bound" approaches. A generic approach, argued both Holloway and Carroll, is applicable in different fields of human service work and in supervision with counsellors working across different modalities. His generic approach is "atheoretical", Carroll claimed (p.44).

The question of 'fit' between counsellor and supervisor, in terms of practice modality has been a repeated theme in the supervision literature. Commenting on the matter of modality fit, Feltham and Dryden (1994) suggested that congruence between supervisor and counsellor orientation is helpful for trainees; Flintoff (1997) argued this position in a New Zealand setting in her study of students on our local Masters programme. Arguments for congruence are based on the

benefits for the counsellor of a shared rationale, shared language, and shared understanding of therapeutic process. Hawkins and Shohet suggested that "enough of a common language and belief system" (1991, p. 110) is needed for supervisor and counsellor to work together. However, they added that a supervisor from a different orientation may be alert to matters of which the counsellor's own orientation might not take account: the risk is that counselling-linked approaches may be less open to what other perspectives could offer. Generic models are intended to overcome this problem, in offering an approach to supervision that produces supervision as a specialist practice in its own right, distinct from counselling in knowledge, practice, and purpose.

In their critiques of earlier models, Holloway and Carroll emphasised the expansiveness of generic approaches. They suggested that "not many writings on supervision stress the contextual issues that impact on the work with clients on the one hand and on the work with supervisees as counsellors on the other" (1999, pp.2-3). They attributed this deficit to the problems of an individually oriented perspective. Their edited volume was, they said, intended to contribute to "an often overlooked dimension - the context" (p.3). Their solution to the overlooking, they wrote, was to add on "organizational factors" to an "individually oriented perspective" (p.3). However, it is my argument that in writing about context in this way, as "often over-looked", Carroll and Holloway show evidence of the limitation of the epistemological position of their models: for if context can be overlooked it is somehow not necessarily *always present.* For a social constructionist the social is always present: we do not exist outside the discursive practices in which we locate ourselves. As I read Carroll's and Holloway's work, it seems to overlook acknowledgement of the theory of knowledge on which it is based: they do not make clear what might be called the paradigm-locatedness of generic models of supervision. Generic models are themselves at risk of being "limited" and "bound", as Carroll and Holloway claimed counselling model-related approaches are: generic models are limited by their own paradigm-locatedness in ways that neither author acknowledges. Any model is paradigm located, I suggest, and thus limited and located. This is not a problem in itself, but it is of concern to me that in their claims for expansiveness of generic approaches Carroll and Holloway do not acknowledge this important

matter. I do not agree with Carroll's claim that his model is atheoretical, applying "across counselling orientations" (1996, p.44). There are many examples in his work that give evidence of his work being theoretically located and thus producing different accounts of reality than those I work with. Arguments for cross-theoretical approaches give the appearance of assuming that although "counselling-bound" models are limited generic approaches are all-encompassing. This, I suggest, may not be the case. I shall take a particular example to illustrate my concern about this stance.

Holloway used an extract from a supervision conversation to illustrate one of her four "contextual factors", the *institutional factor* of agency clientele (1995, pp.100-104). She suggested that the location of the agency in a university setting where students get course credit for being clients was a factor in the supervision. I agree with her claim. However, I do not think that the developmental description and conceptualising that were then assumed are generic. As the example was told, the counsellor began by indicating that she was uncertain about what to do as the client had said she had no problems but had come for the course credit. As the supervision conversation continued the counsellor offered just the following information about the client's background, reported here in the counsellor's words:

> *the client is a volunteer from a college course on interviewing;*
>
> *the client was living with her folks but wasn't entirely happy about it. She has a boyfriend she has been seeing for about 6 months and going home to her parents every night is not very convenient;*
>
> *she is afraid to bring up moving out to her parents. She doesn't want to be ungrateful and actually has a pretty good deal...free rent and board. So it's sort of complicated, I think, but she says it will take care of itself;*
>
> *she's 19 and will be 20 in April;*

With just this much information, the supervisor was able to name the client as having a "developmental issue of separating from her parents" and the counsellor was asked to consider how this counselling might be approached as having a developmental focus. This supervisor response belongs in a particular paradigm, one that accepts a supervisor's authority to speak in this way about a client on the basis of little information; and one that on the basis of little information assumes the authority of a developmental discourse to recommend separation from parents as an appropriate goal for a young adult. The systems model is taking account of context in considering the *institutional factor* of the location of the counselling clinic where the trainee counsellor was working. However, as it is used here the model is also limited, from my perspective, by some theoretical assumptions that are not made explicit in the example. While the context is taken into account, it is taken into account on the basis of assumptions that are not universally held to be true. The assumptions, both of the authority-to-diagnose-on-little-information and of the authority to-recommend-on-the-basis-of-a-developmental-discourse, offer a reading that locates this example in particular discourses of both counselling and supervision. Within these discourses there is an assumption that meanings are given rather than being available for making, and that the supervisor is to name the given meanings. As I read this instance of practice I am positioned in a different set of discursive practices than those re-produced in the Holloway example. I am reminded of Anderson and Goolishian's warning from a Collaborative Language perspective that "the more quickly a therapist understands people, the less opportunity there is for dialogue" (1988, p.382). Although a "big picture" (Holloway, 1995, p.6) systems approach is at work it nonetheless works in ways that are paradigm-located: quick understanding rather than dialogue appears to have been privileged. Holloway's model itself is at some risk of cutting out of the picture possibilities for supervision. Yet this is the charge that Holloway offered to counselling-related approaches. Holloway's claim that counselling-related models reflect "parochialism" (p.4), because they do not consider knowledge from related disciplines such as developmental, educational and social psychology - that is they lack theoretical breadth - might well be made of any approach that does not recognise the constraints and limits of its own terms.

Supervision and epistemology

I suggest that there is a theory of knowledge, an epistemological position, present but generally unacknowledged in all of the accounts of supervision available to us. In proposing constructionist approaches in supervision I have worked at the same time to learn from the work of Holloway and Carroll, and others, and also produce a version of supervision that gives an account of its own locatedness. I am not seeking a for-all-purposes version of supervision, but rather a particular local version that is overtly located in constructionist epistemology. In working to produce a constructionist account I am mindful of Weingarten's (1997) approach in writing: she declared her interest in offering an account that might be placed alongside other accounts, rather than replacing or displacing those accounts. My interest in speaking of epistemological difference is not to establish primacy of one account over another. Rather, I hope to establish points of difference and of interconnection that open space for new possibilities to be spoken, and for epistemological-locatedness to be acknowledged in supervision. For in speaking about supervision, or in supervision, about the ethics and effectiveness of our counselling work, counsellors and supervisors inevitably traffick in epistemology talk. We traffick in epistemology talk whether that talk is at the surface of our conversation and writing, or in the subtext, in the gaps between the words. I am interested in producing a version of supervision that acknowledges epistemological position. Holloway expressed her hope that her text would offer "dialogue about supervision that anchors the conversation in the knowledge of science and the intuition of practice" (1995, p.181). I, too, have hopes for dialogue: for the terms of our scientific projects must be negotiated if the dialogue Holloway sought is to take place.

Where Holloway claimed that relationship is "the core factor" (1995, p.43) in supervision, I argue that paradigm-locatedness, that epistemology, sits alongside relationship as the medium around which the supervision process is negotiated. For it is in paying attention to epistemology that we pay attention to forms of relation (Griffith & Griffith, 1992), as this thesis goes on to demonstrate. In the Holloway example referred to above, the prescriptive authority of the supervisor, based in a particular theory of knowledge and approach to practice, produced a

particular kind of supervisor-counsellor relation. A discourse of supervision as instructional method produced the supervisor in a position of authority over the counsellor's practice and over the client's developmental and counselling needs. The epistemological position produced the form of their relation.

The relationship's the thing – or is it?

Holloway (1995) is not alone in positing relationship as central to supervision. Shohet and Wilmot (1991) suggested that the supervisory relationship is the "key issue" in supervision; Kaiser (1997) devoted a whole book to the supervision relationship; Anderson and Swim (1995) argued for collaboration; Bernard and Goodyear (1998) suggested that the relationship is the most critical aspect of supervision. Carroll (1995) offered a number of examples of metaphors, drawn from his research, to describe the supervision relationship including the familial, psychodynamic metaphor suggesting that "grandmother/mother/baby is like the supervisor/counsellor/client" (1996, p.54). Not surprisingly, he commented that none of the metaphors offered is "adequate", but that there is clearly a "hybridity" to the counsellor-supervisor relationship.

I think that there is much that is problematic about the ways in which the supervision relationship has been conceived. Bird's (1993) work on therapeutic relationships opened a particular door for me in thinking about the supervision relationship. Bird claimed that the therapeutic relationship "has been constructed, interpreted and maintained by one side of the relationship, the therapist's" and she suggested that "it is time to bring the therapeutic relationship out of the closet" (p.48). I suggest that the same claim could be made about the supervision relationship, that it has been "constructed, maintained and interpreted" by only one side of the relationship, the supervisor's (Crocket & McKenzie, 1996). Despite the quest of contributors such as Anderson and Swim (1995) for collaborative approaches to supervision, there is considerable evidence of unilateral construction. I consider here, in particular, two aspects of this evidence, firstly by paying attention to language form, and secondly to literary form (Crocket, 1999).

The history of my own preference for speaking of the partners in supervision as *counsellor* and *supervisor* (Crocket & McKenzie, 1996; Crocket, 1999) predates my encounter with narrative approaches to therapy, which I now use to theorise my preference, and to interrogate the relational pattern offered by the alternate pairing and form, *supervisor-supervisee*. I am not unaware that *supervisee* is a term familiar through the supervision literature that comes out of North America. It is embedded in state licensing regulations for counsellors, and is situated in a culture of supervisors having legal liability for the counselling work of those with whom they engage in supervision relationships. These phenomena construct supervision and the supervision relationship in ways that may seem to be unassailable, but are not outside scrutiny particularly in a New Zealand context.

The familiar grammatical form constructs a particular supervision relationship: the grammatical form of the word *supervisee* offers a position in relationship that construes the counsellor as subject*ed*, as the one acted upon. A supervis*or* supervis*es* and a supervis*ee* is supervis*ed*. The language form, supervis*ee,* posits the holder of that position as an object of the supervis*or*'s practice. And yet, it is the counsellor's work as a professional that brings them to supervision. A supervis*ee* is positioned differently from a counsell*or*: a position from which to engage actively and responsibly in producing effective and ethical practice is less accessible to a *supervisee* than to a *counsellor*. A *supervisee* is hailed (Parker, 1991) as, and offered a speaking position as, a person who is different from the person hailed as a *therapist* or a *counsellor*. For counsellor agency is obscured when a *therapist* or *counsellor* becomes a *supervisee* in relation with a supervis*or* in participating in supervision. The counsellor is produced as the object of the sentence, the *done to* person, rather than a *doing* person. In the obscuring of the counsellor's agency, the position of responsible professional practitioner becomes less accessible to the counsellor. For a *supervisee* is grammatically positioned to have their identity "authored for them" rather than to author themselves (Candlin, 1997, p.xi). These language practices are not neutral: they reproduce particular relations of power (Parker, 1991, p.18). The reciprocal positions of supervis*or* and supervis*ee* and produced by and reproduce a discourse of supervisor responsibility, a discourse that is then enacted at the institutional, professional level and at the level of local, particular supervision relationships. The terms on

which we speak about the partners in the supervision relationship thus raise fundamental questions about the supervision relationship, what the profession expects of it, and how we will each produce and reproduce it.

From my position outside the restraints of the U.S. counsellor licensing system, I note Anderson's and Swim's (1995) continued use of the grammatical form of the word *supervisee*. They continued this usage despite their moves from positivist, instrumental therapies towards collaborative therapies situated in post-modern ideas, therapies that depend on the idea that we are constituted by language, and despite their quest for collaborative approaches to supervision. I argue that the language form offers a positioning antithetical to the emphasis on subjectivity and on bringing forward possibilities for collaboration associated with the practices of which Anderson and Swim wrote.

But my concerns about the one-sided construction of the supervision relationship do not end here, with the matter of language forms, for there is also the matter of literary form. As a counsellor educator, responsible for working with counselling students in their preparation to engage (some for the first time) with supervisors in the community, I had struggled to find contributions from the literature that addressed the counsellor. I looked for material that engaged with counsellors in the matter of counsellor subjectivity in supervision, that might support counsellors to consider the positionings available to them in supervision. Overwhelmingly I encountered a literature that spoke to supervisors about supervision; there was little addressed to the counsellor. While Anderson and Swim (1995) entitled their article, *Supervision as collaborative conversation: Connecting the voices of supervisor and supervisee,* the restraints to collaboration were again visible, in that, while supervisee (sic) voices were present to represent their supervisory experiences, those voices were included to address those on the "other side" of the supervisory relationship, to illuminate the work and stance of the supervisor. Counsellor voices were included, but not to speak of their positionings and experiences of those positions in *co*-constructing supervisory relationships and practices. Their voices were used to illuminate the contribution of supervisors to what seems like rich and satisfying supervision, but not to make visible the contribution of counsellors to that supervision. In this way, it seems that what

counsellors have to say is somehow mediated by the position of supervisor, that they are positioned as responding, commenting on and evaluating. This in itself is not problematic. Indeed, to consult in this way creates a considerable shift in power relations at the level of the local supervision relationship. However, at the same time the effect of the focus on the supervis*or*, I suggest, is to privilege supervisor knowledge about supervision, and to position supervisors as very much the senior producers of supervision. Again, it could be argued that this is not necessarily problematic. However, I believe that these discursive conditions, where supervisees have been invited to make visible the supervisors' contribution to collaborative supervision but not their own contribution, leave therapists and counsellors positioned as not-knowing about the practice of constructing collaborative supervision. They thus remain positioned as junior authors, not necessarily of their therapy practice, but certainly within the supervision partnership and its work. The question, to whom is the supervision literature addressed, is answered similarly across a wide range of literature I reviewed with this question in mind.

Consider, for example, Todd and Storm's major supervision text in the marrriage and family therapy area, with its inscription, "To all the supervisors and supervisors-in-training we have worked with, who have convinced us that there is still much to be learned about supervision" (1997a, p.v); and Bernard and Goodyear's offer of a "review of the clinical supervision field in a way that will be equally useful to the student of supervision and to the supervision practitioner" (1998, p.xii). These are two major texts on supervision, yet neither of them addresses the side of the supervision relationship that is the counsellor. Even when the voices of supervisees (sic) are present, in Todd (1997) for example, it is to advise supervisors rather than to address therapists. This practice is not confined to the literature from North America. In the U.K., Feltham and Dryden (1994) headed each subsection in a chapter entitled *Creating a supervisory alliance* with an instruction to the supervisor. In positioning the supervisor as the recipient of their instruction, these authors invoked a discourse of supervision where the creation of a supervisory alliance is a unilateral action on the part of a supervisor. In the terms of this discourse the counsellor is relegated to the margins of supervision, and possibilities of a co-constructed supervision

relationship are obscured. Given the emphasis of the literature on unilaterally constructed supervision, it would not be surprising that Carroll reported that supervisees (sic) were "very ignorant" about what to expect from supervision, and "fitted in" with supervisors' expectations (1996, p.40). If a counsellor is to use supervision to support their development and practice as an ethical and effective counselling professional, it is reasonable that they might be offered some thoughts about how *they,* too, might participate in creating a supervisory alliance. There are, in my view, real possibilities that the creation and maintenance of a supervisory alliance might be produced as a two-sided, two-professional process.

There is of course never only one story, and there are exceptions to the story I am telling. Inskipp and Proctor (1993) addressed counsellors, in the first part of a two-part publication on supervision, noting that they had found themselves unable to write for supervisors until they had written for counsellors. Carroll noted the importance of supervisees having "some training" in being supervisees so that they have appropriate skills and knowledge to use supervision well, but he did not suggest what that training might be (1996, pp.90-91). Webb and Wheeler (1998) suggested that counsellors need to be supported to use supervision effectively, in particular in disclosing sensitive issues. Greater willingness to disclose concerns and clearer understandings about supervision were reported as effects of limited role induction for trainees (Bahrick, Russell, & Salmi, 1991). A brief review of her own experience as a supervisee is offered by Moore (1991), although in the same volume Shohet and Wilmot, in a chapter on the supervisory relationship, wrote only of the supervisor's responsibilities.

How might it be explained, this extended absence of the counsellor/therapist from the literature about supervision? While the literature might *describe* them, and give advice about what to do to them or with them, it for the most part does not *address* them or have them make visible their understanding of their part in constructing the supervision partnership.

Further, what are the implications of this absence in the supervision literature of a dialogical voice that speaks *with* a present counsellor (rather than *for* an absent one)? What now becomes visible in the discourse of professional supervision?

What are the effects on the supervision relationship and the work of supervision of a literature that positions the supervisor as overwhelmingly responsible for the constructing of the supervision relationship?

A text entitled *Supervisory relationships: Exploring the human element* might lead a reader to expect the addressing of the therapist as partner in supervision. However, even from this text the counsellor is absent, while supervisors to whom the text is addressed read, are told, "As supervisees grow, they often become clearer about what they want in supervision" (Kaiser 1997, p. 90). Similarly Carroll reported his findings that "supervisees are very passive vis-à-vis supervision" (1996, p.92). I wonder how would it *not* be difficult for counsellors to be sure about what they want in supervision when they are mostly positioned in the literature as absent, or as objects to be moved or shifted, developed, monitored, grown, or collaborated with. My point is that counsellors are not offered a subjective position in the construction of supervision literature: the discourse practices by which we language supervision do not construct counsellors as agentive or knowing subjects.

Perhaps the absence of the therapist as dialogical partner from supervision texts can be explained by therapists having been introduced to supervision in general introductory counselling texts. Perhaps, it is in learning about counselling practice that counsellors are also introduced to supervision practice. However, some examples of general counselling texts suggest such an explanation has little credence. For instance Egan (1994) contains no reference to supervision at all, while McLeod (1998) reproduces Frideman and Kaslow's (1986) stage model and Hawkins and Shohet's (1989) process model, but presents no discussion that might offer a therapist some ideas about taking a subjective subject position in supervision. Bahrick, Russell, and Salmi (1991) noted that training programmes do not tend to prepare counselling students for supervision. General family therapy texts do not tend to offer anything better than counselling texts: Nichols and Schartz's (1995) volume, described in Minuchin's foreword as "the definitive textbook of family therapy" (p.xiv), contains no mention of supervision. In an example of a counselling text from the New Zealand context, Manthei (1997) pays rather more attention to supervision than other texts I have considered here.

Indeed, some of his text reads as though counsellors are positioned as his audience: "How does one find a supervisor who will meet one's needs?" asks a subhead (p.140).

I am left with what I think are some very important questions. What is it counsellors do in the construction of the supervision relationship and how might we make that more visible, not just in each individual supervision relationship, but in the style and the content of the literature and theory that supports professional practice? What might be the effects of promoting conditions that call both partners in supervision into positions of moral agency and authority in the supervision itself, and in the literature that supports it? And are such conditions desirable? Does our profession want to construct supervision as being relationally productive of ethical practice?

These questions help open the spaces in which I can begin to articulate a constructionist account of supervision, for, together with the discussion of the literature I am offering, they point to significant aspects of the discursive practice of supervision which have had little attention as supervision has been theorised. They produce further questions that help locate my interests.

What knowledges about supervision are useful for counsellors to have? Must they learn them in apprenticeship-style in the supervision room? Or are there some stories to be told and accounts to be given that could position therapists, including those new to the field, as agentive in co-constructing supervision, without such an opportunity being dependent only upon the supervisor's offer of a collaborative position? I am thinking of stories and accounts that do not merely address a general audience of professional therapists in the neutral tone of some accounts of supervision but that invite counsellors into responsible authority as partners in supervision.

Ongoing exploration of the positionings the literature offers supervisor and counsellor in the supervision relation gives evidence of further restraints on counsellor subjectivity. Haber's suggestion that "the supervisor, then, is a necessary vehicle to help the trainee develop an effective, clear, diverse, and

creative professional identity" (1996, p.37) again points to the supervisor, rather than the supervision, the two-person relationship, as the vehicle for the production of professional identity. Further, supervision is thus constructed as unidirectional: it is always the counsellor who is to learn from the supervisor. In a New Zealand context, Matthews (1981, quoted in Hermansson, 1999, p.62) as President of NZAC suggested that "accountability is achieved in two complementary ways: by the receiving of regular supervision and by ACTIVE participation in professional matters" [original emphasis]. While it might be understandable that Matthews, at that time the president of a professional association, would have been encouraging active participation in the association, I am more interested to notice the contrast here between the emphasis on *active participation in* professional matters and the passive *being in receipt of* supervision. To receive supervision is to hold a grammatically different position than to participate actively in supervision, or in professional matters. Manthei (1997), too, reproduced this form: his text heads the section on supervision, "Receiving regular supervision" (p.136). I argue that a supervision discourse that produces a counsellor as *receiving supervision,* is likely to be a supervisor-centred supervision, and thus one that reproduces the counsellor passivity that Kaiser (1997), Carroll (1996) and others were concerned about.

Through this section I have argued that particular aspects of the literature construct the supervision relationship in particular ways. The pairing of the grammatical form supervisor-supervisee constructs a relationship where the counsellor is in a subjected position. I argue that the absence of counsellors from the supervision literature other than as subjected subjects, to be developed by supervisors, limits the possibilities for producing counsellors as moral agents in their counselling work. Again I make the point that the purpose of supervision is to produce counsellors who are responsible for their own ethical practice. I prefer to language supervision in ways that make positions of responsible professional accessible to counsellors. I argue that appropriate grammatical forms and rich storying that includes the counsellor in accounts of the supervision relationship will enhance the work of supervision in producing counsellors as effective and ethical workers in their counselling practices.

However, the discourse of supervisor responsibility and an accompanying unilateral construction of the supervision relationship dominate the supervision literature. Carroll (1996) cautioned about transferring research conclusions from the U.S.A. (where most of the research has been done) to the U.K., and McConkey called for a "genuine New Zealand version of the discipline" (1999, p.82) of supervision. I believe that the NZAC Codes offer significant opportunity to produce some local accounts that are distinguished from those I have described here. In positioning counsellors in the subjective subject position in sentences, these Codes provide important strategies for the rich storying by counsellors who occupy positions other than at the margins of supervision. There are other distinguishing features of counselling and supervision in New Zealand that have implications for local versions of supervision. The next chapter goes on to consider further some of these distinguishing features.

The work of this chapter

In this chapter I provided a selective overview of the supervision literature, focusing on that which is best known in professional counselling in New Zealand. Having drawn attention to key aspects of supervision, I suggested that supervision practice is shaped by a discourse of supervisor responsibility. This discourse is pervasive, influencing even those professional settings where alternative accounts are available. NZAC Codes, for example, place responsibility upon the counsellor for monitoring their counselling work in supervision, not upon the supervisor. I briefly reviewed the history of supervision, placing this project in contrast with the most recent move in the field towards generic models of supervision. I argued that generic models do not adequately account for the epistemological positions that practice produces and that produce practice. I went on to investigate the supervision relationship, thus demonstrating some implications of the theoretical position I am taking in this thesis. This deconstructing reading of the supervision relationship opens possibilities for supervision to be produced otherwise than a discourse of supervisor responsibility would have it. Co-construction offers different possibilities for the supervision relationship than unilateral construction. I argued that given that the purpose of supervision is to ensure the production of ethical and effective counselling practice, this purpose will be well served by

those discursive practices that position counsellors well to be moral agents in the production of their counselling practice.

Chapter Four

Situating supervision, in New Zealand, and in the psy complex

To live as an autonomous individual, you must learn new techniques for understanding and practicing upon yourself. (Rose, 1998, p.17)

This chapter further situates my approach to the study of supervision in a critical orientation. Firstly the chapter considers supervision in New Zealand, noting further aspects of the professional context that are particular to New Zealand. It then turns to a discussion of the *psy*-complex (Rose,1989; 1991; 1998) and the self-regulation produced by the psy disciplines, and considers the implications of this theory for the professional practice of supervision. I argue that the self regulation and self-scrutiny that legitimise claims for professional status are not unproblematic activities. Turning again to aspects of the local profession, the chapter then draws attention to the acts of governance which NZAC, in particular, appears to want to use supervision for. I conclude that a postmodern version of counselling supervision will take account of the strategies of self and other governance in which supervision is implicated. The final task of the chapter is to locate this current work in relation with commentaries on postmodern supervision practice.

Some further particulars of the local setting

The NZAC Code of Supervision encourages supervisors to pursue research into supervision (NZAC Handbook, 2000). However, a review of local counselling-related publications (Manthei & Miller, 1991) identified no published counselling supervision research in New Zealand and there has been none since that date. Unpublished material includes Flintoff's (1997) masters dissertation which investigated the supervision experiences of students in our Waikato programme, and an MPhil thesis in the social policy and social work area (O'Donoghue, 1999). O'Donoghue's study investigated the perspectives of probation officers and service managers in the Community Probation Service. Under the auspices of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust McConkey visited supervision trainers in the U.K. In his report, McConkey commented on the New Zealand context:

> Supervision needs attention. It needs to be talked about, examined, read about and understood. Our own historical development of supervision requires researching and documenting, so that a genuine New Zealand-based version of the discipline is developed, rather than merely 'transplanting' something from the northern hemisphere (1999, p.82).

In this way, McConkey's report supported the claims I had made in my doctoral research proposal that the local supervision context should be studied. Bunce, too, had pointed out that the cultural context of counselling in New Zealand is distinctive, arguing that "it seems timely to examine overseas research more critically, to assess its relevance and applicability within the current New Zealand setting" (1992, p.2). An overview of the supervision literature offers much opportunity for such an assessment, and to note particular distinctions.

Much of the North American literature on supervision focuses on the supervision of counselling students at masters or doctoral level (Bahrick, Russell, & Salmi, 1991; Friedlander, 1983; Kurpius, Gibson, Lewis & Corbet, 1992; Morran, 1995; Olk & Friedlander, 1992; Pitts, 1992; Swanson & O'Saben, 1993). Glidden and Tracey's (1992) study of supervisory dimensions drew on a pool of supervisors with an average of nine years post-doctoral experience. Such a group stands in contrast with the pool of supervisors available to masters students here in Hamilton. Students in our local context are supervised by practitioners in the community: much of the U.S. research literature appears to draw on the work of faculty supervisors who also carry responsibility for assessing students' work, and of doctoral students supervising masters students. In their collaboration, Ronnestad (Norway) and Skovholt (U.S.) (1993) wrote about a quite different research scene where "supervision research is carried out by student researchers studying student supervisors supervising student counsellors working with student clients" (p.396), and of a different pool of practitioners, "senior practitioners with twenty to forty years experience" (p.398): such complexities are not available in most New Zealand contexts. As well, in the contexts described in the U.S. literature, supervision tends to include the acquisition of skills. When I began this study I believed that it was the expectation in the profession here in New Zealand that supervision focused more on the application of

skills: locally supervision had more to do with practice and less to do with training. In the intervening period, I think the field has shifted and I no longer confidently make this claim. Importantly, as I pointed out in Chapter Three, supervisors in this country are not legally liable for the work of those counsellors with whom they supervise, nor have they had the same gate-keeping role as in the U.S.A. (Todd & Storm, 1997, p.3). King and Wheeler (1999) found that in the UK there are many versions of how much responsibility supervisors have. Without legal tests the situation in New Zealand is perhaps somewhat ambiguous, but there is no codified requirement for supervisors to take responsibility for the work of those they supervise.

While the North American focus on the supervision of trainees means that most of the supervision research has focused on this particular group - counsellors in training- in New Zealand the profession has tended to follow the British practice of supervision continuing after training, as a regular aspect of a counsellor's practice. For members of both NZAC and BAC, supervision throughout a counsellor's career is a requirement of membership. A sense that this requirement is not generally accepted has appeared in the U.K. literature only recently (Feltham, 2000). Cantwell and Holmes (1995) wrote of the "realisation that supervision is not just for beginning therapists but part of the life of any responsible practitioner" (p.35), a realisation that at that time was not new in a New Zealand context. In that context, Manthei (1981) claimed that "on-going supervision of practising school counsellors is now widely recognised as both desirable and essential to the development and maintenance of effective guidance services" (p.40), and Hermansson (1981) suggested that supervision "is fundamental to practice, especially in the early stages of doing counselling work" (p.267).

Despite these assertions and a familiar assumption by counselling professionals in New Zealand that supervision functions as "the profession's chosen assurance of quality and ethical practice" (Proctor, 1994, p.309), we know little about the manner in which supervision happens in this counselling community. I suggest that, given the distinct professional culture and the lack of local research, we urgently need more than the good faith with which practitioners offer, seek and provide supervision, amidst a rapidly changing professional culture that is making increasing demands on supervision. Over recent years supervision has come to be much more visible, in

NZAC newsletters for example, and has been increasingly implicated in governance processes in the Association. I trace some of those instances that are documented in order to notice the discursive conditions of this study.

Professionalisation and professional self-regulation

At this point, I return to Rose's notion of the *psy* complex, introduced briefly in Chapter Two, in order to use it to support my investigation of supervision, both the "grand narratives" of the international counselling professions, and the local expressions of those narratives. The *psy* complex is that group of psychology-derived disciplines that Rose (1989, 1991, 1998) suggested offers individuals the self-management techniques needed for life in the modern world. Rose suggested that psychology has come to offer the individual "precise ways of inspecting oneself, accounting for oneself, and working upon oneself in order to realize one's potential, gain happiness, and exercise one's autonomy". Psychology has done this through "a range of psychotherapies that aspire to enabling humans to live as free individuals through subordinating themselves to a form of therapeutic authority" (1998, p.17). In the Foucaultian tradition this is "disciplinary power": modern subjects are enjoined to subordinate ourselves, through examination and confession, to the authority of the accounts of personhood the *psy* disciplines offer us.

My interest is in what Rose's ideas about the *psy*-complex might mean for professional supervision. If therapy is understood to work in this self-regulatory manner, offering autonomy on the basis of subordination, what might it mean if the same lens is focused on supervision? Using the notion of the *psy*-complex, supervision could be understood to function as a technology to which counsellors "freely" submit, a site at which through inspection, accountability, and self-work counsellors produce themselves as ethical practitioners and autonomous professionals. Supervision may thus be constructed as a site of confession and examination.

While it might seem that a thesis that is concerned with the practice of counselling supervision might do what the great bulk of the literature does, and take for granted the professional practice context, the postmodern positioning of this thesis creates fissures where such assumptions might otherwise comfortably lie. Such fissures make room for questions about professional practice, professionalism, and

professionalisation to arise. When counsellor and supervisor are understood to be decentred participants in a discourse rather than "sovereign" professionals (Luke, 1999), we need to ask more about the discourses of professionalism that produce such subjects. When texts are understood as "simultaneously representing reality, enacting social relations, and establishing identities" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 9), we need to interrogate the discourse practices of the counselling profession (local and international) that produce and are produced by professional supervision and professional self-regulation. Narrative therapy works to interrogate the discourses which position clients problematically in the world: thus it disturbs the limiting and disabling effects of normative judgement. I argue for the extension of this interrogation into the domain of professional practice and, in particular, into supervision. For supervision is a technology by which counsellors maintain ourselves as professionals.

Everyday professional talk abounds with many assumptions about what it means to be a professional. "That's what being a professional is about" is a phrase often heard in the context of professional talk, to do with willingness to examine one's actions and take responsibility for one's actions. For counsellors in New Zealand participation in supervision is a mark of being *professional*. But what are we calling on, when counsellors make this claim that we are *professionals*? How does the claim to professionalism position us? What are the effects of being positioned in a discourse of professionalism?

Abbott and Wallace (1990) suggested that the professions originating from medieval universities - law, medicine, and the clergy - have come to provide the measure for claims to professional status. According to trait theories, which describe these measures, members of professions "own" particular expert knowledge, acquired through scientific study; entrance to membership is monitored; an ethic of service and altruism prevails; claims to autonomy are made on the basis of self-policed standards (Abbott & Wallace, 1990; Ramprogus, 1995). Such descriptions align with popular understanding of the nature of the professions. Developmental theories (Caplow, 1966; Miller 1994) describe a staged set of events that produce a group's claim to professional status, from founding a professional organisation, through developing a code of ethics, to seeking public recognition in the form of legislative

protection. Similar themes emerge from each of these theories: closed membership, autonomy and self-monitoring, protection for members. Abbott and Wallace point out that "'professional' in modern, capitalist societies is generally a term of approval" (1990, p.7) and that "to claim to be a profession is to suggest independence, autonomy and control over work" (p.7). In the context of this project I have a particular interest in the matters of autonomy and self-monitoring. For, as explained in Chapter Three, in New Zealand the profession's claims to autonomy and self-monitoring depend, to a significant extent, upon supervision as an assurance of effective and ethical practice. "I believe that the fundamental building block of our accountability process is good supervision for all members" (Grant, 1995, p.16). Supervision is a technology by which the counselling profession claims to police standards of practice in relation with its stated code of ethics: thus it claims to protect both its members and the public.

Autonomy and self-scrutiny are the conditions of being in which Rose and other commentators working in the Foucaultian traditions have taken a particular interest. My interest here is in the question of the implications, for those of us who profess to be counsellors, of the intersecting of two discourses. On the one hand this interdiscursive moment is produced by the discourse of professionalism, and in particular autonomy and self-monitoring. Disturbing that discourse is another produced by the understandings of the role of disciplinary power that these commentators have offered. Attention has been given to the ways the disciplines regulate the general populace, but what of those of us who work as professionals within the disciplines, who are not immune from, nor outside of the effects of, the disciplines of which we are part? Given this notion of the regulatory function of the disciplines, it seems to me that the combination of professional self-monitoring, and the inevitable regulation by the disciplines, might have professionals particularly caught in webs of self-scrutiny.

My argument is that as counselling professionals we are not just complicit in the *psy* disciplines that serve to regulate the populace at large. We are also, ourselves, subjected to such regulation twice over, firstly as citizens and secondly, and no less keenly, as counselling practitioners. For self-monitoring is foundational to

professionalism and is the basis of the counselling profession's claim that supervision offers quality assurance of counselling practice.

The irony is that professional autonomy and self-monitoring are much cherished. "Regulate ourselves or be regulated," declared the cover of the Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy (1997), signalling an article that argued, "if counselling and psychotherapy don't choose to regulate their own practice, that practice will be regulated by government from above" (Cantwell, 1997, p.166). In New Zealand, warnings about the dangers of the dictates of third party funders and the inherent threat to professional autonomy were offered by Miller (1994). "Counselling can only ever be safe in the hands of a self-regulating autonomous professional," argued Webb (1998, p.13). She went on to examine the effects for counselling professionals in New Zealand of wider socio-political and economic developments, suggesting that the strategies of New Right managerialism in our country "disable systems of care". She advised that professional counsellors need to keep noticing the influences on us of the ways of thinking, such as "the promotion of personal responsibility" (p.13), advanced by these politics. While Webb warned of the "high-jacking of our own concepts" (p.15) as New Right influence gained momentum, I suggest that it might be wise to take Webb's warning further: we cannot take for granted that the system of care that is professional supervision stands apart from the disabling strategies to which she referred. As I will show shortly, moves in the professional association's use of supervision have brought subtle but significant changes to supervision as a (discourse) practice.

Within counselling, claims for professional status are accompanied by the self and other-monitoring by which we justify such claims. Writing of the caring professions of nursing and social work, Abbott and Wallace suggested that "the words 'profession' and 'professionalism' are used in everyday language to *control* those who use or lay claim to the title" (1990, p.7) and that "the idea of professionalism is used to police the actions of those who lay claim to a professional status" (p.8). More recently, Feltham offered a similar observation about counselling.

> Perhaps supervision both keeps counsellors in order and also impresses on the public that serious steps are being taken to monitor and preserve quality. (2000, p.17)

I suggest that the claims of professionalism, for which the professional association and individual counsellors in New Zealand depend upon supervision, cannot but be double-edged.

The technologies of power to which Foucault gave particular attention were the examination and the confession. "If the examination is the technique of objectifying people, the confession is the technique of subjectifying them" (Fairclough, 1998, p.53). Through the examination we are measured against norms; records are kept on us; we are made visible. Through confession we act upon (speak about) ourselves in the presence of another, the authority (or representation of the authority) who "requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, forgive, console and reconcile" (Foucault, 1981, p.61 cited by Fairclough, 1998, p.53). My argument is that it is useful for counsellors and supervisors to think about supervision on these terms, not because we can somehow create separate new orders of discourse outside the operation of these technologies of power, but so that we might recognise how we are thus constituted. Then, in recognising, we might go on to "resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted" (Davies, 1991, p.51).

The point I want to emphasise is that we are less free in choosing self-regulation than the everyday discourses of professionalism and autonomy would have us believe we are. "To live as an autonomous individual, you must learn new techniques for understanding and practicing upon yourself" (Rose, 1998, p.17): to practise as an autonomous professional counsellor, you must take up particular techniques for understanding and practising on yourself (and others). Self-regulation is not an unproblematic matter for as Foucault observed,

> Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form

> from one strategy to another, opposing strategy. (1981, p.101, cited in Fairclough, 1992, p.99)

White (1997) took a critical step into asking about the constitution of the lives, not only of clients, but also of counsellors through professional discourse, noting that such considerations had been relatively neglected. Noticing the "powerful incitements to join in the self-government of the self" that professional discourses offer, White asked,

> Is it likely that therapists could journey into what is the heartland of this culture's technologies for the administration and management of life [professional discourses], and yet resist the powerful incitements to engage in the policing of their own lives? (White, 1997, pp.123-4)

In Chapter Three I considered how the literature posits professional supervision as regulation through monitoring. As autonomous professionals in supervision we put our work up for review, in this way producing ourselves as moral and ethical subjects. However, counsellors are at the same time subject to the call to a problematic self-surveillance that is a feature of modern life and that, it can be argued, creates clienthood for many of those who come to us as clients.

Here is a particular challenge that a poststructuralist understanding of power offers: supervision works as regulative practice in multiple ways. One face of the regulatory function reflects counsellors making a responsible acknowledgement of the power relations manifest in counselling work. This practice positions counsellors as offering our work into the professional community, through supervision, as the responsible production of ethical practice. To assemble ourselves as ethical subjects counsellors participate in this professional "technology of self government", offering our work for monitoring and development (*the examination?*), and ourselves for support (*the confession?*). And, paradoxically, at the same time such technologies of power work to call us into the policing of our own lives (White, 1997) and into what Bird (2000) characterised as the "pathologising self-gaze" of the professional counsellor enjoined to self-scrutiny.

In the light of these reflections on the subjectification of the professional self, I turn to the question of what it is that the counselling profession in New Zealand wants supervision to do. In what ways do the profession's intentions for supervision match the work each of us who meets in supervision wants supervision to do? And what expectations do third party funders, employers, the public and others have of supervision? In turning to this question, I limit my focus to consider the location of supervision in the context of professional counselling in New Zealand.

New Zealand: professionalisation and supervision

" How professional are we and how professional should we become?" asked Ted Wadsworth in 1974, in his opening address at the inaugural NZAC conference (quoted in Hermansson, 1999, p.16). I note that he was asking the question, not arguing *for* professionalism. I remember also the first essay I wrote in the counselling field: the essay question ran along the lines of, "Is counselling a phenomenon of everyday life or an increasingly specialised profession?" That such a question was being asked in the early 1980s in New Zealand is perhaps both an indication of the recent arrival of counselling as a profession is this country, and of some ambivalence towards the move into increasing professionalisation. Did counsellors want the expert status of the *psy* professions, or were we reluctant participants?

But as Miller (1994) pointed out and Hermansson (1999) documented, the trappings of professionalism in New Zealand's largest association of counsellors, NZAC, followed in a rush in subsequent years. From formation there soon followed membership processes, a Code of Ethics, a complaints process, a Code of Supervision, accreditation of senior members, an Ethics committee, supervisor endorsement of membership, more rigorous membership requirements, accreditation of supervisors, membership growth. The question of registration is just now becoming more pressing: with the imminent move to registration of social workers counsellors will be the only workers in the mental health area to remain outside registration processes (Esler, 2001).

Supervision, too, has changed over this time. When I became a counsellor, few paid for supervision: it was a favour given between counsellors. One of my early

supervisors, despite being in private practice, insisted that supervision with me, for which she did not charge, was her gift to the profession. The early supervising I did was, likewise, without charge. Supervisors might themselves have been relatively new to counselling, with little or no training in supervision. Supervision, in my early experience, was a much more "private" contract: it was left up to me to see that it took place. The emphasis of the supervision room was the confessional, rather than the examination room: although the individual was focussed upon, no records or reports to others were required. There was not a Code of Supervision to guide practice until 1993.

It was not until my application for accredited membership of NZAC in the early 1990s that the matter of supervision was raised in relation with my membership of the professional association. At the same time records were being introduced: an acceptable report from a supervisor became one of the requirements for gaining membership of the association. In 1995, without negotiation with its members, the association introduced the requirement of an annual report from each member, attesting to professional development undertaken, and co-signed by the supervisor. The discourses of professionalism and accountability were both at work in these developments, in these extensions of governance. Supervision became both confession and examination. "The norm of autonomy secretes, as its inevitable accompaniment, a constant and intense self-scrutiny" (Rose, 1991, p.241): the notion of professional autonomy calls our profession into increasing scrutiny of ourselves, and supervision is one mechanism by which we do this throughout our professional lives. The professional self-scrutiny that counsellors employ in supervision in this way calls us into close ongoing regulation of our practices. Given this level of surveillance, as a profession we need to take care how we employ the strategies supervision offers.

Rose (1991) suggested that the governance made possible through the technologies of the disciplines has not been the result of some purposeful grand plan, but that "innovations have frequently been made in order to cope, not with grand threats to the political order, but with petty and even marginal problems" (pp.8-9), sometimes initiated and/or carried out at the formalised centres of structural power, but more

often by occupational or interest groups. There are examples of such innovations within NZAC.

For example, in 1997 Janet Irwin, Chair of NZAC's Ethics committee, reported that some "pretty appalling things" were happening in the name of counselling. She suggested the need for "increasing emphasis on competent, effective supervision", because "our professional integrity is on the line" (quoted in Hermansson, 1999, pp.147-148). In both this recommendation and in the earlier introduction of annual, supervisor-endorsed reports, further regulation of members was initiated by national committees with responsibility to manage aspects of the professional organisation that mark it as professional - monitoring standards, and membership. However, I want for a moment to put these two events together.

In 1997 Irwin reported there had been eight complaints lodged with the Ethics Committee in the previous year. Between 1991 and December 2000, one hundred complaints had been processed through NZAC's complaints procedure (NZAC, 2001). Of these 26 were not assessed (because those complained about were not members of NZAC); twenty nine were assessed but were not considered prejudicial to the interests of the association; the remaining forty five went on to be considered by hearing panels. Of these, five went on to mediation, and sixteen to formal hearings, with charges being upheld in twelve instances. My experience as a member of Complaints Panels of the Association's Ethics Committee means that I do not naively assume that the seventeen complaints where the Association exercised its authority to intervene were the only ones where complaints had substance. However, in the light of these statistics I notice that at the same time there were well over two thousand members, all of whom with their supervisors, were furnishing annual supervision reports to be surveyed by the half dozen voluntary members of the Association's Membership Committee. While the behaviours which aroused Irwin's concern may not have been petty or marginal in themselves, what is at work here is an act of regulatory governance that has re-positioned supervision as an explicit tool in the maintenance of counsellors in the category of member/professional counsellor. In this way innovations of governance represent responses not to grand threats to the professional order, but to isolated instances, albeit instances of serious concern to those dealing with them.

Manthei (1995, 1997) raised the question of whether it is the professional association's job to enforce standards/behaviours, on behalf of professionalism, or whether responsibility for safe practice rests with individual counsellors. His preference was the latter. Winslade (1997) expressed concern about the increased policing of members and applicants, suggesting that NZAC was in danger of "inadvertently allow[ing] the evaluative gaze to advance its influence in our own professional identities" (p.15) and of enabling a more hierarchical supervision regime to gain sway . Such matters are still under debate. A regular columnist in the Newsletter, the Mad Hatter, whose contributions tend to be as provocative as his authorial name suggests, wrote:

> it seems that NZAC is involved in far too much policing for my liking. Like policing training. Policing competence. Policing accreditation. Policing supervision. Policing to keep us elitist and keep people out. (Mad Hatter, 1999, p.16)

In a response in the next Newsletter, from Jim Halliday, past Convenor of the Membership Committee of NZAC, we see at work the practices of governance in which we are caught up: as professional counsellors we must police ourselves and each other in these ways in order to assemble ourselves as trustworthy professionals in the political milieu in which we work.

> The Members [of the Association], the public and the employing agencies look to the Association for standards of accountability, credibility and status that distinguish the professional worker from just any persons who may choose to call themselves counsellors. (Halliday, 1999, p.3)

Innovations of self and other governance come in the guise of providing assurance. But what is being assured? And how do we know it is?

It seems to me to be important that we do not assume that by increasing the use of supervision as an arm of governance we enhance the work that supervision does in supporting ethical and effective practice. Indeed, Sampson (1995) comparing

centralised and decentralised ideas about personhood and social order noted that research suggested that the introduction of extrinsic factors, in situations where people otherwise have acted in relation with intrinsic factors, reduced the likelihood that behaviour would be ongoing without the reward. He went on

> We might reasonably conclude from the preceding that the imposition on an ongoing system of something external to it in order to govern the behaviour within that system undoes the self-regulating mechanisms that have evolved, thereby requiring ever greater externality of rule in order to sustain what would otherwise have been self-sustaining. (Sampson, 1995, p.120)

It might be argued then that the increasing involvement of the professional association in governing supervision relationships is likely to decrease, rather than increase, ethical behaviour. Perhaps in asking supervision to do more, the association produces it as able to do less? It is clear at least that it cannot be taken for granted that innovations of governance involving supervision will enhance the work of the supervision relationship nor, more importantly, the work of counsellors with clients.

Some implications for this study

In the context of this study, then, there are many sites at which supervision as professional practice might be interrogated. On Rose's (1998) terms, supervision might be construed as a particular instance of an "assembling of subjects", an assembling of counsellors as "responsible subjects in the machines of morality" (p.182). With these ideas in mind, I need to ask, rather than take for granted, what kind of practice of the professional self is supervision? In what ways does supervision serve "professionalism" in assembling supervisors and counsellors as responsible and ethical subjects? What is the project in which we are caught up? As what sort of selves are we intent on producing ourselves?

These are questions that highlight the paradigm-locatedness of generic supervision models, for those models do not tend to raise such questions. These questions return me again to my first research question. What might a narrative version of counselling supervision look like? What will be its concerns? First of all, in response to these questions, I suggest that a narrative supervision will consider seriously the politics of

its own production. A narrative supervision will be purposefully attending to the relations with the self its practices produce. It will acknowledge the strategies of self- and other-governance in which it is implicated.

The available accounts in the area of postmodern supervision vary in the extent to which they interrogate the practice of supervision itself. For the most part the emphasis is on describing supervision processes. I go on from here to review the wider postmodern supervision literature, noting that it mostly comes from family therapy rather than counselling. Cantwell and Holmes (1995) and Bobele, Garner, and Biever (1995) pointed out that there was little literature that applied constructionist theory to supervision: much of that which I review has been written since this project was begun in 1996. Others have been asking questions similar to those that brought me to this study.

Counselling supervision: some constructionist perspectives

The storying work of supervision

Here, too, White's work provides a significant starting point. White (1989/90) suggested that re-authoring is an activity for training and supervision, as it is for therapy; stories about therapy and about the therapist's "life as therapist" (p.27) invite therapists into storying experiences that "parallel" the experiences of those who are clients in therapy. Referring to Geertz, White suggested that, in situating our experience within available stories, stories which are always indeterminate, and negotiating the interpretation of the stories that are thus produced, we are involved in processes of originating: "it is the copying that originates" (Geertz, 1986, p.380). I think that this idea is critically useful in taking a narrative orientation to supervision for it offers up the supervision space for collaboration in generative practice. When supervision is constructed as productive of new knowledges, rather than reproductive of already known and established knowledges, then supervisor and counsellor are offered a repositioning in relation with each other. For knowledge resides not only in the supervisor; it becomes possible to create knowledge in the spaces between the counsellor and the supervisor, and between the counselling and the supervision, and between the client, counsellor and supervisor. The storying work of counsellor and supervisor focuses on that which the counsellor has already originated, that which

counsellor and supervisor, or counsellor and client, might together originate, and that which is being originated in the supervision itself. Supervision can be understood as a storying of practice that depends not just upon accounts that relay the facts of what happens, but on the making up of accounts. The distinction drawn by Parry and Doan between indicative (fact telling) or subjunctive (possibility-producing) modes (1994, p.188) points to the productivity of storying professional identity when meaning-making is central to supervision talk.

Also arguing that there is similarity between the processes of counselling and those of supervision, Parry and Doan (1994) suggested that the processes of "revisioning" of stories that therapists use with clients are to be applied in "revisioning" the stories therapists have about their clients and about themselves as therapists. "Therapist competencies expand when tagged and accepted," Cantwell and Holmes suggested (1995, p.45). Similarly Neal (1996) wrote of trainees being given opportunity to story their preferences for their therapy work.

Not all constructionist commentaries agree with the claim that the processes of supervision mirror those of therapy, however. In Chapter Three I noted the distinctions drawn by Gardner, Bobele, and Biever (1997), and also Bernard and Goodyear (1998) between therapy and supervision. Gardner, Bobele, and Biever suggested that while in postmodern therapy there is an assumption that clients are experts on their own lives, there is not the assumption in supervision that therapists are "experts on therapy" (p.224). Bernard and Goodyear suggested that trainees are "just beginning" to develop stories of "self-as-professional" while clients have "well developed" stories (p.22). Both author teams thus drew a distinction between therapy clients, whose knowing and expertise about their lives is to be valued, and therapists in supervision who, they proposed, come without material to be storied because of a thinness of *professional* experience. I believe that to suggest that there is little material to draw on in storying the professional identity of a therapist new to the field is to edit out the possibility that the therapist brings a richness of lived experience upon which they draw as they story their professional identity. The storying of professional identity that we do in the supervision room depends upon very much more than just stories about therapy. Of course professional knowledge and wisdom and practice experience are to be valued: those are the pre-existing stories into which

we insert ourselves and thus produce new stories. However, received professional knowledge and wisdom is not all that there is, and the field is impoverished if we behave as if it is. Further, even beginning counsellors have practice that they and their supervisor might collaboratively research and story in supervision: this is an implication of taking seriously the value of local knowledge. Inquiry such as, "What did you notice?" and "How might we make sense of what you noticed?" and "What does this (making sense) mean for your practice preferences?" offers material for storying professional identity. It is the sort of inquiry that might well be made by supervisors of counsellors new to counselling. I suggest that the idea that therapists early in their careers do not have enough knowledge or experience to draw on to story their practice and their professional identity is strongly influenced both by developmental discourse and by the discourse of supervisor responsibility. Further, I will argue that it behoves supervisors not to take for granted the positions offered counsellors and supervisors within these discourses for those positions obscure counsellor agency and responsibility and undermine possibilities for collaboration. A rich storying of professional identity is not supported by such positions.

Solution focussed and strengths based approaches

The focus on the similarities between therapy and supervision processes features, too, amongst systemic and solution-focussed writers. Like clients in counselling, therapists in supervision are looking for "an expansion of options and meanings", suggested Cantwell and Holmes (1995, p.36). Lowe and Guy (1996) acknowledged the isomorphic relationship between supervision and therapy that is presumed in their solution-oriented approach to reflecting team supervision. They wrote of "using solution-oriented methods to identify and build upon the supervisee's competencies, affirm their struggles, and help identify future possibilities and challenges" (p.30). Thus, the theoretical alignment between counselling process and supervision process was a significant distinction in the process they outlined. Solution-focussed supervision was also posited as isomorphically transformed from the process of solution-focussed therapy by a number of other authors (Santa Rita, 1998; Selekman & Todd, 1995, Todd, 1997). Amongst family therapists there appears to be more ongoing acceptance that models of therapy might be extended into supervision, and there is less emphasis, than in counselling, on distinguishing these fields of practice in terms of process.

A collaborative orientation

A collaborative orientation in supervision is echoed by a number of postmodern writers (Anderson & Swim, 1995; Bobele, Gardner, & Biever, 1995; Fine & Turner, 1997; Gardner, Bobele, & Biever,1997; Storm, 1995). I have found Fine and Turner's metaphor of the style of work thus produced very useful in making visible the substance of collaborative practice.

> Therapists experience the supervisor co-laboring with them in creating new therapy paths – everyone wearing the same yellow hard hats as they jointly forge through the brush and maneuver across uncharted ground. (1997, p.237)

There are visible here a number of moves that indicate the possibilities for a postmodern supervision. Firstly, the relationship is characterised as *therapist-supervisor*, opening space for therapist as subjective subject. Unfortunately, as I have already noted, many postmodern writers in supervision do not make this move and continue reproducing the supervisor/supervisee form (for example, Anderson & Swim, 1995; Bobele et al., 1995; Gardner et al., 1997; Lowe & Guy, 1996). Secondly, the work of Fine and Turner's description is *co-laboring*, working together at the same task. Both these moves, for therapist as subjective subject and for co-labouring, while not removing hierarchy, unsettle the familiar power relation of mainstream approaches to supervision and thereby produce supervision differently. In this account, *both* therapist and supervisor are finding ways forward, and producing knowledge for local situations where neither has been before. Knowledge is to be produced in a mutually generative process, rather than reproduced out of the supervisor's rich store of privileged knowledge about all facets of therapy and supervision. This shift in the understanding of knowledge production was echoed in Neufeldt's (1997) constructivist account and in Bobele et al.'s constructionist one.

> Rather than having a ready set of tools or ideas to give to the supervisee in some developmental sequence, we are ready to offer to supervisees an opportunity for collaboration. (Bobele et al., 1995, p. 18)

As emphasis is offered to meaning systems and to the collaborative negotiation of meaning in dialogue, new therapy paths are created (Bobele et al., 1995; Cantwell & Holmes, 1995). And the *yellow hard hats* of Fine and Turner's description? Perhaps supervision is not the safe and reassuring haven where therapists are offered the protection of the supervisor's expertise, but rather it is a domain in which hard work is to be done, in collaboration. The focus is no longer on the role of the supervisor alone as in social role accounts of supervision, but supervisor and counsellor are co-labouring at the same task, finding ways forward over previously uncharted ground.

Power

Amongst the postmodern accounts of supervision some attention is paid to the matter of power. For example, Fine and Turner (1997), Bobele et al. (1995, 1997) and White (1997) have all pointed to the ways in which the supervision space is itself subject to the practices of normalising judgement. White's work stands out for its attention to the effects of professional culture on therapists. As I have noted, he suggested that in bringing concerns to supervision therapists are subject to the kinds of internalising self-judgements that produce problems for clients. In response to this problem, White suggested that narrative consultation should mirror the practices of narrative therapy by deconstructing "negative truths of identity" and "renegotiat[ing] meaning in regard to the many events of therapy" (1997, p.151). As well, White paid attention to the power relation between counsellor and supervisor, arguing that, because of the payment for service and the privilege of consultation, the power relation of supervision should be acknowledged rather than obscured as it is, for instance, in the adoption of a term like co-vision. White's points, about professional self-judgement and about the power relation of supervision, will be critical to the argument I make in this thesis about how supervisor responsibility might be understood. My interest is in a supervision that takes responsibility for the ethical production of power. Fine and Turner pointed to the value of transparency, open dialogue about power relations and attention to the sites of its production. They suggested that in such practices, "the power hierarchy is tempered, not eliminated" (p.234).

Concerned with managing both the ethical production of power and their responsibilities as academics in evaluation and accreditation, Flemons, Green, and Rambo (1996) asked some important questions about the ethics of evaluation within a

postmodern framework. Although their focus was on the evaluation of counselling students and was more directly concerned with matters of academic assessment than with the supervision practice that is my focus, their arguments are useful in this present context. They suggested that "ethical decisions ... are neither subjective nor objective, but *relational"* (p.45, original emphasis). I understand them to be arguing that ethical decisions in counselling, in supervision and in assessment are processes that are available for dialogising: the realities of our practices are to be negotiated in practices of respectful relation in the local contexts in which they occur. A similar point is made by Stewart and Amundson: "fairness, justice and ethics *are* struggle" (1995, p.73, original emphasis). Ethical practice, in supervision and for counselling, is an ongoing process of relational negotiation, and a task at which counsellor and supervisor work (and struggle) together, mindful of the practices of power in which they are engaged.

Group and team supervision practices

Most of these commentaries on postmodern applications in supervision are provided by those whose background has been family therapy and social work. There is significance in the cultural context of this professional group, for already practices such as live supervision (Hardy, 1993; Lambert, 1989/90) and team supervision have produced a supervision practice that is familiar with more diversity and fluidity than counselling traditions of individual supervision. Supervision and training tend not to be distinguished either, as training is done in live contexts as teams work together with families. I go on here to survey the literature on reflecting team supervision. Much of this writing is systemic rather than constructionist/narrative. By including it I am not intending to conflate the sets of therapies, but rather to acknowledge the broader professional landscape within which this project is situated.

In Chapter Two I introduced reflecting team work as one practice used in narrative therapy to recruit wider audiences to the storying of clients' lives. White (1997) argued for the decentring of the therapist through such therapeutic practices. I have been building an argument in this document for a version of supervision that disturbs the centrality of the supervisor in supervision, de-centring the supervisor. Reflecting team practice provides a technology by which a supervision that is not supervisor-centred might be produced. As I have said, the literature largely focuses on reflecting

team supervision practice as a training function. Firstly there are descriptions, such as James, MacCormack, Korol, and Lee's (1996), of live training and supervision in the context of client work. The team, made up of the supervisor and student colleagues of the therapist, reflect in the presence of the clients and after the client has left. James et al.'s work is systemic, rather than contructionist. The dialogical emphasis of Andersen's and White's work is absent: "the reflections usually lasted between three and five minutes allowing each member time for one or two comments", reported James et al. (p.50). A research study by Young, Saunders, Prentice, Macri-Riseley, Fitch, and Pati-Tasca (1997) suggested that, in this style of reflecting team supervision, therapists in training were much more alert to the power relations between them and the supervisors than were supervisors. The therapists in training reported considerable anxiety about performing appropriately in the team setting, confirming Perlesz, Young, Paterson, and Bridge's earlier suggestion that

> the use of reflecting teams may have inadvertently created competition amongst trainees to provide the best, most relevant reflective comments for the family (and for the live supervisor!). A side effect of the R.T. [sic] format is the added pressure to be helpful, which may lead to errors in the direction of working too hard, saying too much, and directly and/or indirectly making suggestions about what family members should or should not do. (1994, p.23)

Writing of their use of reflecting teams in social constructionist training, Biever and Gardner (1995) suggested that supervisors need to take responsibility for ensuring both clinical and training issues are considered. Both foci are present and it seems to me that it must be the therapy that is the over-riding imperative when therapy and training needs are competing in such situations. Paré (1999c) suggested that those who work with reflecting processes in counsellor education must understand the social constructionist theorising that produces the practice (p.304). For example, he suggested that reflecting team members use curiosity to "effectively 'deconstruct' problems, creating space for alternative stories [White, 1992]" (1999c, p.296). Paré offered some particular guidelines, both for inviting and preparing clients and also for preparing the reflecting team, intended to produce an ethical process of reflection. He noted, too, the use of tapes of client work to which therapists in training respond as a reflecting team, making a tape for clients. This is a practice he had encountered in our

work in the programme at Waikato. The emphasis on this reflecting team work is the same as in live work: the direct audience is the client and the team responds in terms of the client-counsellor conversation. It is thus training, rather than supervision, focussed.

The second emphasis of reflecting team training is on those contexts where the academic supervisor speaks with a counselling student about their counselling work. Other counselling students make up the team who reflect on the supervisory conversation. In these settings the client work is not live: it involves "self report" (Bernard & Goodyear 1998, p.92), stories of practice and of professional-self-at-practice. Roberts wrote of "post hoc supervision: bringing the cases back home" (1997, p.341). Supervision in this mode might also involve reviewing tapes of client work. In both situations the emphasis of the team is on responding *to* the counsellor, not for the family or individual client as in the first set of practices. While Paré (1999c) argued for the importance of constructionist understanding for reflecting team work in training, Lowe and Guy (1996) argued for "theoretically-aligned" reflecting team practices (p.27). This stance goes beyond the assertion that the model of therapy is the model for supervision, in suggesting that in the supervision both supervisor and team take an explicit theoretical orientation based on solution-oriented practice. Lowe and Guy suggested that in distinguishing a theoretically-aligned version of reflecting team practice from "pluralistic, atheoretical" (p.28) approaches, such as Tom Andersen's and Harlene Anderson's, they produce a different version of reflecting team practice. This version is marked by the consistent "push for change" (p.29) in the work of both supervisor and team. The push for change comes from a purposeful solution-oriented supervision process. In Phase One the supervisor's work is characterised, Lowe and Guy argued, as "active and directional" (p.31), and the focus is on the therapist-in-the work, rather than on the "drama of the case" (p.31).

I think this is another important distinction of which Lowe and Guy might have made more: the focus on the therapist in the work rather than the work. A focus on "the issues and dilemmas that the case raises for the *therapist*" (Lowe & Guy, 1996, p.31, original emphasis) contrasts with Roberts' "bringing *the cases* back home" (1997, p.341, my emphasis). Roberts went on to offer a story of practice where the team members were invited by the therapist to offer "help with the case" (pp.342-3). Then,

she reported, "each person contributed an idea or two": these ideas were practical suggestions of what the counsellor might do next. Thus the supervision work is "case"-focussed and instrumental: there are echoes of the prescribing of action as in the Holloway (1996) example discussed in the previous chapter. Lowe and Guy, in offering clear, phase by phase, guidelines for solution-oriented reflecting team practice, declared a preference not to "avoid instrumentality but to avoid neither the valorisation or denial of instrumentality" (p.44). However, I think their discussion of instrumentality could well have extended into further discussion of the implications for the process of the supervision of their emphasis on the *therapist* working with clients. The field is already sufficiently warned that *counsellor-alone* is not ethical supervision practice (Gardner et al., 1997). However, I do not think that the case for the *counsellor-in-relation-with-client* focus of supervision has been sufficiently made or theorised. Lowe and Guy's position makes a contribution to this task, to which this study will continue to pay attention.

Reflecting team supervision is innovative practice in counselling in New Zealand, and particularly when this study began. Lowe and Guy's suggestion that the reflecting team format no longer seemed "novel or unusual" (1996, p. 26) in therapy and supervision did not and does not hold true for this context. More recently, Lowe and Guy (1999) described a move from consultant-led reflecting team supervision to peer-group supervision. They suggested that it was useful to have two consultants available as the group began, one to conduct the interviews in Phases One and Three and one to work with the team in Phase Two, both modelling solution-focussed practice. They noted the potential for peer supervision that the reflecting team process offers.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has situated supervision in a New Zealand context, noting that there is no local research base on which this study might draw. It has made connections between matters of supervision and governance in this local context, drawing on Rose's work on the governance offered modern subjects within the *psy* complex, and noting that increasingly supervision is being produced within NZAC as a tool of governance of counsellors. Finally, this chapter has located this study within the literature on postmodern approaches in supervision, noting that for the most part these accounts

have been produced out of family therapy, and thus draw on different practice traditions than this study.

Chapter Five

A research practice for a counselling practitioner

The best way to find out what professionals do is to become one yourself; but it is difficult, in the process of being socialized into a profession, to avoid identifying with it and internalizing its frame of reference. (Ingleby, 1985, p.80)

Introduction

I have already written of the three professional roles out of which I began this research project - counsellor, supervisor and counsellor educator. My professional identity as academic researcher was less well formed. As I worked to develop a satisfying research practice within this academic context, I was aware of my positioning in contesting discourses. Despite now having immersed myself in the protocols of academic research in the process of accounting for this project, I do not want to avoid acknowledging what might be called, on Ingleby's terms, my pre-socialisation experiences nor the positions I found for myself along the way. Weingarten (1992) suggested that we should cherish the evolution of our ideas: the ideas that have been produced *and* the processes of their production have been equally engaging for me in this project. This chapter will attend to both the ideas about research put to work in this project and the evolution of these ideas in my professional life.

I believe that it is an ethical act to select a research method, rather than a technical act. It is an ethical act to give an account of one's selection as well. Personal and professional histories are productive of selection (Hoshmand, 1994; Hanrahan, 1998) in ways for which most research reporting does not give account. In this document, I take the position that research practice is imbued with moral action: at every step of the process, from identifying the site of inquiry, naming the purpose of inquiry, constructing a method for inquiry, conducting inquiry, and producing an account of inquiry, research practice can be construed as ethical and relational practice and accounted for on those terms. In this project, I looked to take up and extend the ethos of which Martin wrote:

> Recently, I have begun to wonder if the fundamental coins of therapeutic exchanges might earn richer dividends of understanding if considered more as 'moral goods' than 'discursive data for social scientific dissection'. (Martin, 1995, pp.245-246)

My intention is to engage with the discursive data that this project offered me, and to account *for* that engagement and *in* that engagement in ways that give evidence of my understanding of these actions as moral actions.

And there is a third thread to insert into the story line at this introductory point. That third thread is the pragmatic story of the research process. In summary, the data generating phase of this project involved a group of five counsellors and supervisors, including myself, who met for reflecting team supervision as a particular kind of peer group supervision. We met together fortnightly for a year. Our supervision work, our reflections on and in that supervision work, and our meta-level research conversations about supervision all produced the data that I went on to analyse, using discursive analytic tools. But how did I come to select such a process? And what ethical, technical, theoretical and practical questions presented themselves at each stage of this project? That is the story I tell in this chapter and the next.

Thus there are three threads to be woven through the account in this chapter: the interdependent ethics and pragmatics of the research process, and my producing that process within the discourse practices of social science research, and counselling research in particular. Research design is a circular rather than a linear process. A linear account of the research method would report in a straightforward way what the research events were and what body of research practice they drew on. This present account, in working to address both the *development* of a research design and also the *playing out* of the research method will perhaps lack some of the linear clarity of the more familiar genre of reporting. The design occurred before and during the research: that aspect of the telling tells my story as designer as well as the story of the research. The *playing out* of the method occurred during the time when I worked in the project with others and it is still occurring as I write: but the call of the research report genre is to write as

though the process happened in a staged and closed time frame and to tell it as though it can be told independently of the *results* stories. I alert readers to my decision to compromise linearity to some extent, in this telling, in favour of a richer description of the production of a unique research process. Having produced a research project that I claim fits Kaye's description, "productive rather than reproductive, creative rather than representational" (1990, p.35), I have taken to heart Lincoln's suggestion that "'getting it right' is a project best abandoned" (1997, p.52). Rather, *making sense of it* has been at the heart of this project.

As the chapter continues, it considers first the relationships between research and practice, noting how my professional life and so this project have been shaped by my positionings within those discourses. I outline the particular ethical and knowledge positions from which I engaged with producing the project. I describe the steps in designing and setting up the data-gathering phase, and the inquiry processes that yielded the data.

Relationships between research and practice in counselling

Again, I point to the specificity of the New Zealand context and to Bunce's (1992) claim that counsellors in New Zealand do not take for granted that research and practice go together. Just this week, in the NZAC Waikato Branch Newsletter, the new branch Chairperson said this about herself in an introduction to the branch:

> I am an ENFP in personality type which means I am gregarious and values-based in my approach to my work. I will always think 'Who do I need to talk to' about this, not what book, journal, netpage should I scan! (Barrett, 2001)

At the time of my own counsellor education (then called "training", as much counsellor education in New Zealand still is), there was not a masters degree in counselling in which I could enrol. In the small piece of original research I did then, and in subsequent academic research, my experiences were of not being well supported by the methodologies available to me. Bunce recommended that the relationship between practice and research be strengthened, but did not offer ideas

about particular approaches to research that might more meaningfully inform practice. To my practitioner eyes and ears, over the years of my involvement in counselling there had been much written and spoken in our field expounding the need for research to inform practice and many calls for practitioners to do things differently. Talk about the value of links between research and practice had a dominant theme of exhorting practitioners to read and engage in and with research. And it seemed to me that much less attention was paid to reflecting on the hierarchically-arranged nature of the research-practice binary or, in particular, to the pragmatics of how research *processes* and findings might be made more accessible to and useful for those whom research purports to serve. Despite good intentions, calls for "joint ventures" (for example, Anderson, 1991) between practitioners and researchers, that did not speak of how such ventures could be possible, seemed more like empty rhetoric than invitations to participate.

Howard, whose U.S. writing I used at the time of my own university counsellor education, asked the question, "Can research in the human sciences become more relevant to practice?" (1985, p.539), questioning whether the scientist-practitioner model had delivered on its promise. In their commentary on Howard, Heppner and Anderson (1985) noted a number of authors who had also suggested that counsellors did not see research as being much use to them. While both these articles and my own counsellor education go back more than fifteen years, the issue of the relationship between practice and research is a matter of continuing interest across the wider fields of psychology, counselling, and education (Anderson, 1997; Atweh, Kemmis & Weeks, 1998; Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, Tindall, 1994; Hoshmand, 1994; Hoshmand & Martin, 1995; Hoshmand and Polkinghorne, 1992; Lampert, 2000; Moje, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1997; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992; Stricker, 1992; Whiston, 1996; Yeatman, 1996, for example).

This project, then, is located within the history of an ongoing discussion in the counselling field on the themes of research and practice positioned, or not, in a binary relation. Within this project I worked to go beyond the binary in exploring other meaningful ways to conceptualise the relationships between counselling practice and research. The hyphen is a location in text (Fine,1995): I have

worked to produce this project with an awareness of both the connecting and separating processes that might be possible at the hyphen between practice and research. For example, I worked to pay careful attention to "the social relations of knowledge production" and the kind of knowledge that might be produced (Weedon, 1987, p.87). Weedon's call was more than an instrumental one: it was a call to ethical action. And it was a call that has echoes in other feminist research literature as well as in education, psychology and counselling research writing, where increasing emphasis has been given to the power relations of research practice and the implications of those relations for the subjectivities of research participants.

Over the past decade increasing attention has been paid to changing the terms on which the research-practice relation is interpreted. An emphasis on bringing forward practitioner knowledge and in research processes being practice-informed is evident (Hoshmand, 1994; Hoshmand & Martin, 1995; Hoshmand and Polkinghorne, 1992; Lampert, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1997; Whiston, 1996; Yeatman, 1996). Polkinghorne wrote of turning his "wisdom around and look at what could be learned from the practitioners about how research could be done" (1998, p.x). Advocating for the "study of practicing knowledge", Hoshmand and Polkinghorne suggested "practice as the appropriate context for constructing and testing our maps of instrumental knowledge" (1992, p.63). While this thesis goes on to make a distinction between instrumental approaches to knowledge and constructionist approaches to knowledge, I am nonetheless interested in Hoshmand and Polkinghorne's emphasis on constructing and testing maps and accounts for practice in practice. Similarly, the emphasis Kaye put on both research process and purpose offered an emphasis I wanted to foster in my research.

> Inquiry must derive from a framework capable of accessing the processes involved in psychotherapy if we are to become more effective therapists and if our research is to have any meaning for practitioners. (Kaye, 1990, p.38)

In constructing this study, I was attracted to the positioning of practice and practitioners that I understood to be offered here, and that I heard in Polkinghorne's suggestion that "the criterion for acceptability of a knowledge claim is the fruitfulness of its implementation" (1992, p.162). Research might benefit from the involvement of "practitioners and ordinary knowers" (Yeatman, 1996) not just as informants to the research but also to the research process and to its evaluation. Distinguishing between practitioner inquiry and researcher inquiry, Polkinghorne (2000) went on to suggest that "practitioner inquiry is based not on a general to specific inquiry, but on a contextualised dialogic between a particular practitioner and a particular client" (p.454). Ideas about the processes of everyday inquiry of ordinary people acting in the world, from the philosophical work of Heidegger, Gadamer and Dewey, are relevant, suggested Polkinghorne, to understanding the processes of practitioner inquiry. Gamader, for example, drew on the Aristotelian distinction between *phronesis* and *techne.* The latter is the prepared, already-in-place "blueprint" for certain action in a defined context, and the former a negotiated engagement with the particular dimensions of the context where change may occur in the context and for the parties in the context (Polkinghorne, p.275). This distinction between what I call the instrumental application of knowledge and the construction of knowledge in application has been central to the ideas I have developed out of this research project.

Howard's 1985 question, "Can research in the human sciences become more relevant to practice?" (p.539) appears now, in 2001, to have many possibilities for an affirmative answer, and to have evolved into the productive question, "In what ways is research in the human sciences engaged in productive interrelationships with practice?" One of these ways, I suggest, is to construct research as an ethics-centred practice. In constructing a research process to investigate the questions I had about the professional practice of counselling supervision, ethical and pragmatic questions were always interrelated.

Beginning with ethics

There were a number of criteria that I set myself as I looked for a research design. Many of these criteria centred on my relationship with participants. I had not ever understood research as "just a matter of collecting and analysing scientific information [about 'subjects'] (rather than) research as relationships between people", as Hanrahan (1998, p.303) described her transformation. Rather, I saw the ethics of relationship as central to my research design. I wanted to work with participants in such a way that their giving to a research project would be reciprocated in some way. As I saw it, participants would be offering time, knowledge, interest, and commitment and I wanted participants' offerings to be somehow directly reciprocated, beyond a more general recognition that they were giving to the field in terms of the knowledge this study might pass on. In whatever ways I proceeded I wanted to reduce the chance that my emphasis would be on credentialling myself while overriding the interests of the practice community, and the particular practitioners, upon whom the research would depend. I wanted a method of inquiry that would offer the best chance of the research being generative for participants as well as for me. I sought a method of inquiry, too, that offered me respectful relationship with participants in not asking them to participate in the project in ways I was not willing to do myself. Hanrahan wrote that despite her efforts at partnership in research her research subject was "taking all the risks of action and self disclosure" (1998, p.312). Paying attention to the social relations of the production of knowledge in research as Weedon (1987) advised, I had been wary that I might be similarly positioned. I was thoughtful, too, about what I might do with the actions and disclosures of research participants. What method of inquiry might treat with respect what participants had offered a research project, producing data that were clearly "moral goods" (Martin, 1995), at the same times as what became the project's data could be investigated with professional and intellectual rigour?

Other aspects of my positioning

These concerns for the ethics of research practice all led me into a preference for some kind of collaborative approach to inquiry. My interest in collaboration was

also influenced by my own positioning and history. In looking towards collaboration, I was looking away from the isolation that I had observed was the experience of many of those involved in research for academic qualifications. My preference in my teaching and counselling and supervision practice was for relationships of collaboration. How might I bring such practices into research? It seemed to me, too, to be wise to draw on that which I knew well as I moved into that with which I had less familiarity and facility. Since my own experience as a counselling practitioner was far greater than my experience as a practitioner of academic research, how might my knowledge and experience as a counselling practitioner inform my newer practice as a researcher? As I asked myself this question I favoured a research process that could get me as close as possible to the supervision practice that I wanted to research. Although Shotter (1992) suggested that the best we can do in research is to feel our way about with prosthetic devices, in feeling my way about in supervision I wanted a research tool that drew on practice knowledge in order to get as close a *feel* as possible. I was interested in having access to the "small and ordinary" (Weingarten, 1998, p.3) events of supervision, the ways in which ordinary counsellors and supervisors were working in the to-and-fro of their everyday practices. When our counsellor education team brought together a team of people to write a text about narrative practices (Monk, Winslade, Crocket, & Epston, 1997), it seemed to me that an important aspect of that endeavour was that we were paying attention to what I saw as the ordinary work of ordinary practitioners (p. xiii-xiv). In that project a participatory and inclusive stance made possible the involvement of a range of practitioners. That experience confirmed that to share one's work with others one needs only to be interested in dialogue: prior expertness is not a prerequisite. Again, there is value in the voyaging that produces ideas, as much as in the arrival at ideas. The question, how are ordinary practitioners making sense of these ideas in their practices, and making sense of their practices with these ideas, seemed to me to fit well with a postmodern interest in local accounts.

For my seeking of a method of inquiry was informed by the location of the project in social constructionist theorising. Could I use in research the theoretical tools of constructionism that I used in narrative therapy, and if so, how could it be done? Commonalities between counselling and action research processes had been

articulated (for example, Whiston, 1996). Although there were no clear pragmatic templates of formal constructionist research practice in counselling or supervision on which I could draw, the ethos on which I could build my research practice was clear to me. In particular, I sought a process that would firstly produce ethical, respectful and collaborative relationships with participants, mindful of the relations of power between researched and researcher.

Available models of practitioner inquiry

In research practice a particular expression of collaborative inquiry was the co-operative inquiry groups that came out of Reason's "new paradigm" work (Reason, 1988, 1994). It seemed to me that the reflection in action on action for action of a co-operative inquiry group successfully took into a collaborative research format the processes of reflective practice familiar from counselling.

> So in co-operative inquiry all those involved in the research are both co-researchers, whose thinking and decision making contribute to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience, and *also* co-subjects, participating in the activity being researched. (Reason, 1994, p.326)

Further, co-operative inquiry was a research practice that had been used effectively in introducing new counselling practices in a practice setting similar to my own (Farrell, 1993). Evidence of efficacy was appealing. As I worked to answer my fourth research question about suitable inquiry processes, the co-operative inquiry group appeared to offer a relationally ethical and collaborative research process. There were two problems, however, with going on to apply Reason's work directly, in my own study. There are significant epistemological distinctions between the humanistic psychology that produces co-operative inquiry and the constructionist inquiry that I sought to generate. Co-operative inquiry emphasises the experiential production of knowledge while constructionist inquiry emphasises the discursive production of knowledge. Reason asserted a critical difference between co-operative inquiry work and postmodern work: experience can be unmediated by discourse, he claimed.

> ... we can bracket off that discourse and approach experience more directly. We can do this through mindfulness disciplines [...] consciousness-raising, and through systematic engagement with the cycles of action and reflection that are a central part of participative and action inquiry methods. (Reason, 1994, p.334)

Further, Reason voiced opposition to the use of deconstruction, suggesting that

> ...given the current power relations on the planet, the first voices likely to be "deconstructed" are those of people already oppressed, the voices of the poor, of women, but also of the body and of the earth itself. (1994, p.334)

While I believe this claim misunderstands the politics of deconstruction, at the same time Reason's concern for the politics of research practice resonated with the disquiet I brought with me as a practitioner about data analysis processes in research. The move from "field texts to research texts" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) is construed less problematically through the humanistic lens of collaborative inquiry processes, for experiential knowing is privileged. The task I faced was to reconcile my own concern for the politics of my research practice while taking a position that did not slip into an acceptance of experience as outside discourse. Even in a world of postmodern plurality there was no narrative coherence in researching constructionist practice on the terms of humanistic inquiry. At the same time, my desire for a collaborative research practice that could access the processes of supervision and produce research that would be meaningful for practitioners meant that I understood Reason's charge of "overintellectualizing" (p.334) amongst deconstructive approaches. The dilemma of positioning my research was not one in which I was alone. The attraction of humanism's "respect for the integrity of experience" in response to mainstream modernist psychology having been "dehumanizing in its theory and practice" was noted by Parker (1999c, p.25). However, continued Parker's argument, the attractive alternative of humanism has its own problems, for a more complex understanding of subjectivity is needed than the privileging of individual experience that humanistic approaches to research have offered. Lambert noted

the danger of assuming that research participants are offered "voice or agency" when researchers present a sense of an unmediated story (2000, p.93).

While humanism was an attractive counter-practice to scientism, it was not the most appropriate alternative for my purposes. Working to locate my research practice in social constructionism, I looked beyond co-operative inquiry, while influenced strongly by the positions-in-relation its collaborative research processes offered and by its clear privileging of practice. However I wanted a different position in analysis than its epistemology offered.

Research design and method

Introduction

It was from counselling practice that I drew the substance of the data-generating processes. In Chapter Two I drew attention to narrative therapy's purposeful identification and recruitment of audiences in the rich storying of clients' lives (White, 1999). As a researcher I would also be taking up an audience role in working at a research site. I decided then to make use of the narrative practice of working with audiences in such a way that my research work would not be intrusive but rather productive. The reflecting team could offer a research-focussed audience and a practice-focussed audience to the rich storying of counselling and supervision practice. The reflecting team, developed as a therapeutic process, also offered a very suitable site in which I could research supervision in a way that both met the ethical positions I sought and drew on my existing practitioner strengths. Reflecting team practice was central to the research proposal I developed. White suggested that counsellors and clients are "primary researchers" and those who gather more data in a more formal way are "secondary or supportive researchers" (1995, p.78). There was compelling evidence of the reflecting team process as an excellent site for primary research (Mclean, 1995a, 1995b, for example): this project extended the application of the reflecting team process into more formal research.

Steps in setting up the research project

I proposed that I would form a group of counselling practitioners who would meet regularly over the course of a year for supervision. I would be a member of the group. Our supervision would be peer supervision, structured in a reflecting team format with alternating supervisors. The work of the group would be open to research. The reflecting team would produce an "already-open" site for research: as researcher I would not be "interrupting" the privacy of a one-to-one supervision relationship with my researcher activity. The group would be formed on the basis that it provided a research site for me to investigate narrative approaches in supervision: it would provide supervision for its members.

The next step I took was to test my ideas out informally with some local counsellors whom I knew had an interest in supervision or in narrative practice. I was interested in whether they thought the project was a viable one for me to do, and if they thought it would be worthwhile for the local counselling community. This testing out was done by phone and in person with individuals. All those I consulted were enthusiastic and on the basis of their support and my own satisfaction that this process was practically possible and ethically sustainable, I wrote a formal proposal to the University's Higher Degrees Committee and made application to the Ethics Committee of the School of Education.

With approval for the research to begin, I met with potential participants as a group on two occasions. On the first occasion I introduced in more detail my ideas for the project and sought the group's responses to those ideas and their thoughts about possibilities for the project. How would this work in practice? We talked, too, about practical matters, such as timing of meetings. It was at this point that my relationship with those counsellors whom I had consulted changed, as they formally became positioned as potential participants rather than as collegial informants.

Subsequent to this meeting I developed drafts of the project's guiding documents. With ethical approval to proceed with the project, I mailed these draft documents to those who had come to the first meeting. The changed positioning of potential

participants was formalised as I provided a statement about the project, Information for participants (Appendix I). This statement outlined the background to the project. I also provided the Proposed ethical guidelines, Proposed structural guidelines, and Proposed supervision working agreement (Appendices II-IV). These documents all related to the work and ethics of the reflecting team supervision and the research processes. The documents were posted to potential participants, together with an initial consent form (Appendix V). On the basis of this initial consent form, potential participants could then opt in or out of the next stage of developing the project. That next stage involved a full morning meeting with potential participants to negotiate the project on the basis of the proposed documents and to clarify any further aspects of the project. At that meeting, too, we spoke together about reflecting team work, and arrangements were made for those present to view a video tape of a reflecting team process. The video was a personal one filmed by Michael White at an intensive training programme at the Dulwich Centre in Adelaide. Some viewed the video later, together with me, and others took it and viewed it in their own time. Reading material about reflecting team work was made available for the group members to take away (Andersen, 1995; White, 1995). It is important to note that there was not reflecting team supervision material that described the process we were to use, and work that I have drawn on in Chapter Four, such as Lowe and Guy (1996) was not available at that time. Those present at the meeting were then invited to consider whether they wished to participate in the project and were given a further consent form to sign. From that point the reflecting team supervision meetings got underway.

Informed consent

While recognising that the overall research design was mine, and the overall responsibility for the project as a doctoral study was mine, I wanted to take as collaborative a stance as possible in setting up the research. All potential participants had conducted counselling-related research at Masters level, and were familiar with the ethical requirements of research conducted within an academic context. The research community was also a professional counselling community, and I wanted the research guidelines to be subject to the approval of participants as well as to the School's Ethics Committee approval. For this reason, I used a

two-stage informed consent process whereby in the second stage of the process participants actively engaged in amending or accepting the guidelines I proposed and in developing a working agreement in regard to the supervision task. The Ethics committee endorsed the guidelines and agreements that the group finalised.

There was a further significant consideration in terms of informed consent. When supervision is the object of study there are some less "witting" participants: the counselling clients of those counsellors who bring their work to supervision. In our day to day practices counsellors do not generally inform particular clients that we will be discussing our work with them in supervision. However, clients have the right to know that a counsellor is taking part in a supervision research project. I therefore asked participants to provide clients with a professional disclosure statement. I provided my clients with one too. Amongst other things, this statement informed clients of the counsellor's commitment to professional supervision, noting that the counsellor was participating in supervision in a group engaged in a research project on supervision. In this way clients were informed. One of the participants, Clare, noted that some of the counsellors she supervised in her private practice had asked that she not consult the reflecting team group about her work with them.

Participants

The initial selection of potential participants occurred as I was designing the study, asking myself who might be interested in such a project. I wrote a list of about ten local counsellors and supervisors, known to me within the local and nearby counselling communities, whom I might contact to test out the viability of such a project. I had taken a dual focus in my inquiry: narrative approaches to supervision and the New Zealand context. Because of this dual focus I had approached counselling colleagues whom I knew to have knowledge and experience of, or interest in, narrative approaches to counselling and supervision, or to have considerable experience as a supervisor and some sympathy towards narrative approaches. All those colleagues I approached initially to gauge response to the possibility of such a project supported me going ahead to propose the project, and they each expressed interest in participating in the development of the proposal. Because all expressed a keenness to participate that was beyond my

anticipation, I accepted their offers. I wanted to limit the group numbers, and I did not want to put myself into the position of selecting, even randomly, amongst a larger group of potential participants once the consultation had taken place.

All those who participated in the initial meetings consented to join the project, and they all continued to participate throughout the year. One consequence of my selection process was that the group members were all women. Although there had been some men on the list of those with whom I thought to test out the project, those potential participants who were available by phone when I made my initial inquiry, to test out whether or not they thought the idea was workable, were all women. Group members who joined me came from a range of practice contexts, in community agency, education, and private practice settings. All had masters degrees in counselling, and had therefore undertaken research themselves.

The ongoing research group was a closed group: it was not set up to include new members. Group members were all members of New Zealand Association of Counsellors and so bound by the Association's Code of Ethics and Code of Supervision (New Zealand Association of Counsellors Handbook, 2000).

My approach to those potential participants whom I approached at first was guided in two ways. I have already noted my interest in working with "ordinary" practitioners, rather than consulting those regarded as expert, or leading figures. To work with ordinary counsellors and supervisors would live out the ethic of building communities of practice that narrative ideas offer. Secondly, my own migration of professional identity and my locations in the local counselling community had alerted me to the ways narrative therapy was held in some ambivalence in some groups in the local counselling community. By some they/we were seen to be a rather selective lot, and by others we were seen as misguided. At that time I was concerned not to add to a story of a professional community somewhat divided between narrative practitioners and "others", by selecting only those who were rigorously narrative in their practice. Rather, I wanted to stay in touch with the wider local practice community in this study of supervision. My interest was not only in narrative practice but also in understanding more about local supervision. I wanted to accommodate

multiplicity within the project: that fitted with a postmodern stance. I did, however, select to approach only those whom I knew were sympathetic to, interested in and had some familiarity narrative practice. The project was, after all, overtly designed to investigate narrative approaches to supervision. With the benefit of hindsight I am able to identify the complexity I invited in through the theoretically different and inclusive, rather than theoretically aligned (Lowe and Guy, 1996) and selective, invitations to participate. Overall, I think that aspect of the selection led to the project emphasising more of the local and less of the constructionist than I had anticipated.

Dual role relationships are another particular complexity in engaging in this kind of research in a relatively small professional community. However, Tomm (1993), pointing out that dual relationships present both dilemmas and richness and are not necessarily problematic, offered useful guidelines. As a group we had varying relational connections with each other, which we each disclosed in one of the preliminary meetings when we were negotiating the project. For example, although, at an earlier time, I had been in a teaching relationship with two of the group members, we had since become professional colleagues. Two others had worked together in a counselling relationship many years earlier. In living and working in a small counselling community all of us brought prior successful experience in managing dual role relationships. As far as I am aware we went on to manage these relationships very well.

My participation

I was both participant and researcher. As a counsellor and as a counsellor educator I brought my own work to supervision, and I was a reflecting team member and a supervisor, in turn. I was also a researcher. As I have explained, my participation came out of my willingness to position myself amongst those I researched, to ask no more of others than I was willing to ask of myself. Recognising that participants would take a risk in putting their work under the scrutiny of their peers by engaging in this project, I wanted to acknowledge and support that professional action by engaging in it myself. On one hand this protected me from the angst of which Hoskins wrote: "When I hid behind my participant's experiences, I felt the angst of expecting her to do what I was

reluctant to do myself" (Hoskins, 2000, p.56). On the other hand the flattening of the research hierarchy produced by my participation may have obscured some of the authority I had in the project as researcher. There was also the authority that accompanied my position as a counsellor educator and academic. My role was also complex on a practical level. I was dealing with many processes. I set up video and audio-taping before every session, managing the changing and turning on and off of tapes during session; I prepared drinks for the start of every session, and food for the research meetings; I shepherded beginnings and kept the project going at the same time as I was a group member, participating as others were. Immediately after the research meetings I returned to my work with clients at the Student Counselling Service: I did not have the luxury of being immersed in research, but was immersed in practice some of which I was researching.

At times I wrote to the group between meetings, recognising the commitment of participants, offering some comments about reflecting team processes, clarifying a permanent change of venue, explaining delays in sending transcripts, and giving other practical information. In the early stages I wrote the letters to support both relationship-building and confidence-building. I understood myself to also have a group leadership role, building and maintaining the group both for the purpose of supervision and for the purpose of research.

Confidentiality for participants

In the tasks of supervision, group members were bound by the NZAC Codes of Ethics and Supervision (2000). In terms of the supervision, team members needed the protection of confidentiality in ensuring their freedom to address problem issues in their practices. The ethical guidelines we negotiated offered possible responses for counsellors when material was inappropriate to bring to the supervision group. In Chapter Six I explain my approach to confidentiality for reflecting team members as I write this document.

More critical was the need for confidentiality for the counselling clients of those counsellors who brought their work to supervision. Confidentiality of clients was protected by changing names and identifying details on transcripts and in this document. In one case a transcript was withdrawn from the study. As I have

written this document I have kept in mind the risk of identification, and for that reason I have not used one other transcript.

Other ethical considerations

In setting up the group, although I was already known to them all, I offered members information about my qualifications and abilities to lead both this group and the research process. The *Ethical Guidelines for Group Counsellors* (Association for Specialists in Group Work, in Corey & Corey, 1992), while not ethically binding, provided a useful reference point in considering the group dimensions of this project. I provided these guidelines as a resource to group members, to make clear my willingness to take the responsibility of maintaining ethical group practices. At the same time, I was clear in my expectation that we were forming a research community, and that I wanted to be a member of the group, as much as a leader of a project. In this I was recognising the skill and experiences group members brought to the project.

There was a potential conflict of interest between the purposefully interrelated foci of the inquiry group, which was formed for the purposes of both supervision and research. I deliberately chose a process that did not dichotomise research and practice, but rather one that interwove them. Therefore I took part in the group as a participant; and I also took responsibility to monitor the balance and to ensure that both sets of foci were given appropriate attention, checking out with the group members, from time to time, that from their point of view both supervision needs and the research agenda were met. On one occasion when I felt keenly the competing foci, I chose to privilege my supervisor responsibilities over my researcher role. On that occasion, Anne, the participant who had been the counsellor while I had been the supervisor, commented in the Phase Four conversation:

> I wanted to say that I felt like you were very much fully there as my supervisor rather than as a person doing research.

I refer to this instance of practice here to show how my response to the dilemma appeared to the participant.

'Preserving' the research conversations

I audio and video recorded all meetings of the group, at all stages of the process. The processes described in the section that follows generated about fifty hours of supervision and research conversations and many hundreds of pages of transcript. Transcripts were made principally from audio recordings, but with reference to video recordings in some instances where audibility was a problem, or where a number of people were speaking over each other. Many transcripts were reworked a number of times; some small passages of conversation remained inaudible. Transcribing was done using standard prose punctuation, without sophisticated transcribing conventions. I chose this style to make the texts accessible to group members, since transcripts were available for group members for checking, and annotating if they chose, as each script was finished. I was concerned not to offer transcripts to participants in what Burman described as an "inaccessible representation of the interview that might compound further the potentially alienating effect of seeing spoken language written down in all its (in terms of written codes) untidiness [Stubbs, 1983]" (1994, p.64). The transcripts in this way became smoothed out text, with most of the smoothing out having been done by my hand, but some corrections having come from participants. The untidiness of speech has been smoothed out in this document for purposes of accessibility to practitioners, and for those more familiar with reading narrative text than text overlaid with transcribing conventions. Bird (2000) suggested that all transcription is fiction. I suggest that smoothed out transcript-text is no more partial, and no less scientific, than text overwritten with transcribing conventions, for both are fictions of one genre or another.

At first I sent each group member a copy of the transcript for their own interest, and one to return to me if they wished to make any comments or corrections on it. After some time, with the agreement of the group, I sent only one copy, which could be read if the participant wished to read it, or annotated and returned if that was what they wished. Some participants regularly read and returned the scripts with brief notes, but for others the scripts were a burden that I did not feel comfortable imposing on them as busy practitioners. This was where the research

task was mine to carry, and my invitation to share interpretive authority was not possible given the time commitment that most participants had available.

The reflecting team as a mode of inquiry

With ethical approval and the initial negotiation of the project complete, the data generating phase of the project began, with the reflecting team process as its central research device. The reflecting team process gave me access to what I wanted to study, the practices of constructionist supervision and local supervision, and it offered opportunities for constructionist research practice. It thus kept the project aligned with my initial research questions. Like a co-operative inquiry group, it made possible the production of "knowledge in action for action" (Reason, 1988, p.13). As I have explained, reflecting team practice was developed as a therapeutic tool, rather than a research tool. It had been used in a variety of ways in therapy, in a health advocacy project (McLean, 1995), and in restorative practice (McLean, 1995). While Cox's (1997) doctoral study researched the use of the reflecting team as a training device for counselling students, I am not aware of the reflecting team being used as a formal academic research tool, to give access to practice. While I first thought of it as a device by which I could engage with supervision as a site of inquiry, I quickly saw that reflecting team supervision practice would be an aspect of the supervision inquiry as well. In introducing the reflecting team earlier in this document I emphasised its development in the process of live therapy work in teams (Andersen,1987); White's production of the practice of definitional ceremony (White, 1995, 1997, 1999); and the use that has been made of reflecting teams in live training (Young et al., 1989; Davidson & Lusardi, 1991) and in solution-focussed supervision (Lowe & Guy, 1996, 1999). Here, I offer some comment on how I see the reflecting team working as a research device, before going on to describe in step-by-step fashion the processes of data-generating that it enabled.

The reflecting team offered a particular orientation to reflective practice and inquiry. As I have indicated, in many ways it dismantled the borders between practice and research. The reflecting team process offered us opportunity for moment by moment reflection on our work, and inquiry of each other about our practice. In these ways we were engaged in aspects of what White suggested was

primary research, that done by practitioners and their clients. And at the same time aspects of the secondary research, such as the transcripts and the videos that we watched in Research Meeting Two, immediately influenced the practice of participants. For example, Liz commented in Research Meeting One:

> I think that is also the value of having a transcript. I went away thinking, "How did these things happen?" But I was able to look back at the transcript and have some more ideas about that.

In the moment Liz had not been in a position to answer her reflection on practice, but the research products supported her inquiry, which she was then able to take back to the team for further investigation.

The processes of reflective practice were studied by Schon (1983) who drew attention to the practitioner processes of building theory from practice. He differentiated between espoused theory - the professional canon - and theory in action, explanations of practice that are not accounted for by professional theory. The emphasis of Schon's work was on reflection on the moment by moment aspects of practice: the reflection upon practitioner action was through a close-up lens. Situated alongside an approach to therapy that acknowledges that moment by moment living is a social and cultural production, the research process of this study emphasised not only reflection on what practitioners do, but also the tools available to them for both practice and reflection. Attention was drawn to the discursive and situated processes of reflection, rather than to the reflective practitioner as autonomous actor. In this way the reflecting team offered a process of practitioner inquiry that produced reflective practice as discursive activity.

The inquiry process: the reflecting team in supervision

The reflecting team group provided professional supervision for its members (action) and researched that process (knowledge seeking and generating, for further action). The group met fortnightly on an ongoing basis for peer supervision from February to December, 1997. One meeting was cancelled at short notice when I was ill, as the technical setting up for recording was my

responsibility. However, when I was at an international conference other group members chose to continue to meet (the forewarning making it possible to organise recordings). I take this latter instance as evidence of both the commitment my colleagues offered to the project, and its value to them. Our meetings were held at the University, all but the first three in a room dedicated to the counsellor education programme and with a one-way screen. The room had not been used by any participants during their own counsellor education: for them it was a research and practice room, not a teaching room.

The roles of supervisor, counsellor, and listening team members were rotated according to a schedule set up at the beginning of the year. On most occasions that we met for supervision, we held two separate reflecting team supervision processes, each with a different counsellor and supervisor. However, every third meeting a Review, which I shall describe shortly, was substituted for the second supervision. During each supervision set, the supervision took place in a four-phase reflecting team format, based around White's descriptions of the phases in therapy (1995).

Phase One	Firstly supervisor and counsellor spoke together, with the team behind the one-way screen.
Phase Two	The second phase saw the counsellor and supervisor take up the listening position while the team reflected on and responded to the first phase conversation.
Phase Three	The counsellor and supervisor responded to the team's reflections and responses according to the counsellor's interest. The supervisor and counsellor concluded the supervision itself.
Phase Four	The whole group came together, reviewing the supervision process that had just occurred, and linking it with ideas about supervision practice.

At this point I am aware of the fine line between a description of the research method and the reporting of results: the acts of production, *producing,* and the results of production, *product*, are not readily separated. I will leave sparse this description of the reflecting team process in order to highlight here the structure of

the process in which the inquiry group engaged, acknowledging that reflecting team process is only very thinly described.

It would not be accurate, either, to assume that Phases One, Two and Three were the practice phases and Phase Four the research phase. Practice and inquiry were interwoven. While we were engaged in shared inquiry about the processes of supervision in Phase Four, inquiry was ongoing: that is what reflective practice is about. Throughout Phases One to Three practice was in the open and available to the inquiry process. At times I found myself taking a monitoring role in Phase Four if participants became captured back into the content of the supervision conversation and in this way re-engaging with the supervision. Interestingly, I found no comment in either the therapy or the training literature about this phenomenon, of returning to the content of the session. I considered it important to take this lead in clarifying for two reasons. Firstly, I wanted to ensure that what had been consented to was followed and counsellors were not led back into conversations that had been "closed". Secondly my intervention meant that the research practice was given focus. Others took up this monitoring role on occasions too.

I note here that Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine emphasise the dyadic work of Phases One and Three. Chapter Ten focuses on the reflecting team process and in particular on Phase Two. All the results chapters call on the Phase Four conversations as that was the time when the team took a metaposition, exploring from a number of positions the supervision work we had just done.

Reviews: an inquiry process and managing the project

Every third meeting the second supervision time was available to the group as a Review meeting. The meetings were unstructured: my intention in building them in was to have time when any aspect of the project could be talked about, problems or difficulties could be addressed, and I could check out participants' experience of the project. The group used the time to review ideas about supervision, to review their experiences and the group process, and to review a range of aspects of the project. For example, at one point I was very keen to change from having two supervision sessions each meeting, to having only one in

order to give more time for a more unhurried process. My suggestion was a matter for negotiation and in discussion other group members expressed preference to continue to have two supervision sessions each time. The group's preference prevailed. Practical matters, too, were attended to during this time. For example, we reorganised the schedule when someone was going to be away from a meeting. These Review meetings were also recorded, and the transcriptions contributed to the data.

Research Meetings

The inquiry group also met three times during the year, in June, September and December, when we engaged in a meta-level structured reflection that focussed on the research questions more directly and purposefully. On each of these occasions I used a different group process: this was part of my project of producing myself as a researcher. Just as one cannot produce oneself as a counsellor just by reading accounts of counselling and then reproducing those practices, one cannot produce oneself as a researcher just by reading accounts of research and reproducing those practices. The inquiry group provided a forum to learn how to do research at the same time as I learned about supervision. While it is more usual for thesis writers to extract their own learnings about research process into other documents (for example, Hanrahan, 1998; McWilliam, 1993), my learnings at each of these research meetings influenced the project as it continued: hence their inclusion here.

Prior to the first research meeting, I sent a letter about the meeting to the group, offering some questions for reflection, and some responses of my own to the question what the narrative metaphor offered to supervision. These responses were intended to show my good will, my willingness to also offer my thoughts, rather than to "hide behind" participants (Hoskins, 2000). However, with hindsight, I wonder to what extent my taking the position of first speaker (Cobb, 1993) also closed down possibilities for others to speak, or to speak differently. As well, the conversation was wide ranging, perhaps because of the familiarity in the group, and at times I was not able to pick up points of interest before the conversation was taken elsewhere. I think, too, this was a function of my leaving the structure and focus much too wide. To my later disappointment as I

transcribed and analysed, points of interest to me were left undeveloped because of my reluctance to interrupt and to direct the research conversation more clearly. I had wanted to be respectful of the group's interest: I did not know what possibilities might be brought forth in a relatively unstructured conversation. However, I now believe that interruption to thicken particular accounts could have yielded richer data than this first Research meeting produced.

Another significant aspect of Research Meeting One was that to a large extent I positioned myself as participant: on reviewing the transcripts there were moments when I wished I had employed inquiry rather than offering an opinion. My participation, in inserting comments and ideas as other participants did, did not serve my research interests as well as inquiry might have.

At the second of the three research meetings, I offered more structure, both in terms of process and content, having asked the group's permission to proceed in a more structured way. For the first half of the meeting I had three foci on which the discussion focussed: preparing for supervision; workload monitoring; experiences in the project of reflecting team work. The first of these foci came out of my interest in the work counsellors do to contribute to constructing local supervision relationships: I was interested to know what practices participants used in their preparation for supervision. This inquiry addressed my third research question about education for supervision. I have taken the position that it is a task of counsellor education to educate counsellors to use supervision well. In asking the inquiry team about the practices they employed in preparing for supervision I was seeking a resource for this aspect of counsellor education. The second question, about workload-monitoring, arose out of Clare's speaking of her experiences of workload monitoring earlier in the project (see Chapter Seven). Since I was not familiar with such practices in supervision I was interested to hear of its history in her work and of experiences others might have had with that practice. This interest addressed the research question relating to local supervision practices. My third area of investigation, our experiences of the reflecting team process, was intended to help us story further these practices as they were being employed in the project. This interest came out of my first research question about constructionist approaches in supervision. In the

Research Meeting, I focussed my questions on Phases Two and Four, those phases more different from the dyadic supervision with which all participants were familiar. I asked what practices counsellors had experienced as helpful in those phases in our work together thus far. As part of this conversation I spoke of my preference for the team engaging in dialogue in this phase. (In Phase Two supervisor and counsellor assume listening positions and the team reflects upon and responds to the Phase One conversation.) At that time we were still struggling to bring, to the Phase Two conversation, the dialogic focus that distinguishes narrative approaches to reflecting team practice (White, 1995). It is not unusual to have to work to avoid monologue at this phase (Lax, 1995; White, 1995). I was keen that we work to develop a conversational style where we engaged in inquiry about and response to each other's responses to the Phase One conversation, and I wanted to make my interest transparent to the group. These three matters then were the focus of the content of the research inquiry in Research Meeting Two: preparing for supervision, workload monitoring, and the reflecting team process.

As well as offering this clear content focus I offered a very clear structure for the process in this second meeting. During the first half of the meeting, I used the style employed in the Public Conversations Project (Chasin, Herzig, Roth, Chasin, Becker, Stains, 1996; Public Conversations Project, 1997). This strategy was designed to open speaking space for difference in contexts where there may be widely differing views. In this style each group member, in turn, responds to a specific question, with pauses before answering begins, and between speakers. I introduced this strategy in Research Meeting Two in an attempt to slow the conversation, not because of problematic differences, but in order to give each speaker attention, and time to make points fully, without interruption. It meant that I heard from everyone in response to each question I asked. I, too, answered each question, again positioning myself as participant as well as researcher so as not to "hide behind" participants. Some group members commented afterwards that they had found the strategy overly structured. However, I found the data that were generated offered more sustained attention to particular ideas.

In the second half of this second Research Meeting, I showed selected excerpts from earlier reflecting team supervision videos, providing transcripts. The selections were moments that had offered me puzzlement or pleasure or held my interest in some particular way, and were chosen to include brief examples of the work of all participants. In watching the videos I asked participants to comment on some particular questions, focussed on the themes of *preferred practices*, and *dialogical space*. For example, I asked, "What do you notice that you'd encourage the supervisor to continue? And why would you?" These two questions invited the inquiry group into positions as audience to preferred practices. My intention was to provide a process of acknowledgement of certain practices in ways that would bring them further to our attention and so enhance our engagement with them. However, although I was not aware of it as a problem at the time, I came to see that these questions could be understood to have invited normative evaluation of each other's practice. Group members did not take up this invitation, however. I also asked the group: "What ways of speaking invite the other person into a position of dialogical partner?" This question was another attempt to influence the group towards a more dialogical practice. I positioned myself as coach and project director in these actions of drawing attention to those practices.

Participants were more interested in watching the videos than in reading the transcripts. It might perhaps have been helpful if I had sent these out ahead of the meeting. Watching the video, Liz commented:

> What I'm seeing on the screen that I don't see reading (the transcript) is the struggle to make sense.

Liz's comment speaks to the relationship between transcript-text and video-text, to which I shall attend in Chapter Six.

I asked participants to take the transcripts from this meeting and to make on them any annotations they wished. All transcripts were returned to me but they yielded a great deal less data than our conversation about the videos did. Perhaps this was not surprising given the time-consuming nature of annotating transcripts.

Although I consistently made transcripts available to make a place for and call on participant authority, my evaluation of this practice is that it is not appropriate to ask participants in a project of this size, and indeed in many research projects. The project confirmed for me that it behoves me as researcher to do some preliminary analysis before asking for further engagement from participants with materials generated in transcription.

In the third Research Meeting I invented an inquiry process that took on some aspects of reflecting team work. This was another effort to offer some structure to the inquiry and to experiment further with the reflecting process as a research tool. I interviewed participants in pairs, in rotation. As I interviewed Clare and Kate, Liz and Anne took the listening position. Then I interviewed Liz and Anne while Kate and Clare listened. Each succeeding pair was invited to respond to both what they had heard from the others, and to respond to particular inquiry from me. In this way, again, inquiry was layered upon inquiry, response upon response. I remained firmly in a position of inquiry as interviewer, a position much more productive of richly developed data. At times, too, the interview pairs with whom I was speaking engaged in inquiry of each other, a practice familiar during other aspects of the project.

Certainly this was the research meeting that provided me with the richest material; it also seemed to offer participants more opportunity to speak more richly of difference. I wondered how much the structure had supported that speaking and claim that it did make some conversations possible. One such conversation is the deconstruction of the celebration metaphor, explored in Chapter Eleven. But then, this meeting was also at the end of the project, so those effects might be expected because of the experiences that had been shared together and the relationships that had been built.

At the end of this meeting, we spent time together as a group, bringing to a close our work together as an inquiry and supervision group. We then went out for lunch.

Approaching the analysis

In many ways this data-generating phase was straight-forward for me: it drew on the strengths I brought to the project, and used skills that were familiar to me as a counsellor and supervisor. But it was in the struggle to know how to go on from here that my socialisation into the position of researcher took on new dimensions: in discursive terms, I had to learn to position myself in new discourse practices.

I began the project with a huge concern for an ethical research practice, expressed as a concern to treat respectfully those who participated with me, and to *give* them more than I *took* from them. Drawing on counselling practice ethics in engaging with the participants in the project was reasonably unproblematic for me. However, the challenge in producing myself as an academic researcher came when I was searching, in post-reflecting team phase, for an ethical path on which to continue to pursue the project. What sorts of analytic and re-presenting practices could best serve both the community professional practice community and the academic assessment one? For Lincoln's comment resonated for me:

> Our friends and critics alike demand that they see evidence that our representational and "othering" practices have not done violence to our respondents and their lives. They look for proof against our having acted colonially. (1997, p.48)

I turn next to an account of the steps towards generation of an ethical and satisfying approach to the data analysis.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has located this project in an ongoing discussion on the relationships between counselling practice and research. It has demonstrated how I have used counselling practice to inform the research method. It has set out the ethical positions that produced the project, emphasising the importance placed upon the respectful positioning of participants. The tiers of inquiry that generated data have been outlined: the four phase reflecting team supervision meetings, regular unstructured Review Meetings, and the three meta-level Research Meetings.

Chapter six

Producing an analysis

A large part of doing discourse analysis is a craft skill, more like bike riding or chicken sexing than following the recipe for a mild chicken rogan josh.
(Potter, 1997, pp.147-8)

Introduction

This chapter takes up the story of the research method, focusing on data analysis. Firstly, the chapter explores the complexities I experienced around the analytic task, produced by my positioning in relationship with my colleagues. I show how I needed to grapple with the theoretical question of what data texts are before I could let go of concerns about the ethics of my research relationships that were perhaps more informed by my humanist past than my constructionist present. As Davies suggested,

> we cannot easily shed ... the interpretive frameworks that we took up as our own in learning to understand and use humanist discourses not just as social scientists, but as participants in the everyday world. (1991, p.47)

I do not regret my caution about my use of the transcript-texts for that caution was informed, too, by an emphasis on relationship associated with my practitioner positioning. The second focus of the chapter is a discussion of the field of discourse analysis in order to locate this study and its analytic method in relation with that field. I then describe the detail of the approaches to analysis that I employed, including the particular analytic properties of text on which I focused. An introduction to the ensuing chapters follows, before the chapter concludes with a reflection on the acts of writing this document.

Working for an ongoing ethical relation

Because of the importance I place on accounting for the ethics of my practice I decided not to apply the principle of parsimony to this re-telling about the paths I

took in generating an analytic process. Rather, I employ an ethic of transparency: just as a narrative therapist situates their questions by informing a client about the thinking that has produced those questions, so I situate my analysis by making explicit the authority I am taking up here. The thick descriptions favoured by a storying therapy are perhaps more appropriate in narrative research accounts than parsimony.

> The principle of 'parsimony' in psychological theorising, in which the simplest, most economical explanation of phenomena is favoured, is just one expression of the attempts to filter out the messiness of mental life and the complex accounts we develop to make sense of it. (Parker, 1999c, p.27)

"Contradiction, inconsistency, ambiguity and ambivalence [that] are the stuff of human psychology", suggested Parker (1999c, p.27): this account acknowledges that contradiction, inconsistency, ambiguity and ambivalence are also the stuff of this research practice.

With the participatory phase of the project over and my position changed from co-researcher to sole researcher, the social relations of knowledge production continued to be a central concern. Participants' comments, both within the research data and informally, indicated that I had been successful in my desire to give back to participants and the professional community at the data-generating phase of the project. And as I moved on in the analytic work I wanted to maintain the ethic of respectful relation that had been practised during the inquiry group. However, I was no longer interacting with the project members, but with data texts. Proceeding on the basis that these texts were moral goods (Martin, 1995) took me into a new level of understanding, of what it might mean to be an academic researcher using constructionist theory, that the participatory phase had not. To employ the notion of the constitutive force of discourse, in spoken dialogue and in participation with others in counselling or supervision or teaching, was familiar practice. However, this history of dialogical engagement left me rather more tentative than was helpful when it came to taking up the authority to tell a story of the constitutive force of discourse in relation with transcript texts

whose contingency was not necessarily visible to others who would read that story.

When I had designed the research process, with my interest in practice I had imagined that the data texts would be full of straightforward exemplars of constructionist supervision practice that I could transfer, relatively unproblematically, to this document. I would thereby hold them up to the counselling community as practice that might be followed. In that way I would directly acknowledge and honour what participants had offered the project. And I would not be in danger of upstaging participants by taking up an expert position on their contributions, using my voice to drown out theirs. Rather, I could set out a range of discourse practices in supervision, demonstrating preferred constructionist practice. But it was not that simple once I had the texts we produced. My position as researcher became complex in ways that I had not anticipated. There was the matter of competing ethical principles when I was considering what I might privilege in the analysis and in this re-presentation. One aspect of this dilemma was noted, but not resolved, by Burman (1992), in a study of counselling interaction. She acknowledged two competing principles: on one hand, her political responsibility to deconstruct practices of professional power and, on the other, the relational responsibility to the research subject who made those practices visible, especially when that person was a counsellor who was her colleague and friend. Should Burman as researcher uphold the principle of not doing harm in terms of the counsellor, the research subject, who had entrusted Burman with access to her practice and with whom she was in a professional and a personal relationship; or should she critique the practices of power she had observed in the therapy in order to promote justice? In some ways I had made this question less complex for myself than Burman, or Hanrahan (1998) and Hoskin (2000) both of whose unease with the power relation of researcher and participant I quoted in the last chapter. For I had put my own counselling and supervision practice into the research as a participant: my own practice was also available for analysis. Nonetheless, the disorderly practice that was represented in the transcript-texts presented me with some difficult questions about how I might use texts that did not always offer the straightforward exemplars of practice I had imagined. White wrote about therapy as a disorderly process (1995), but there is

little evidence of disorderliness in his written accounts of his work. Should I present the disorderliness of the supervision practice and professional reflection of the inquiry group that the transcript texts made visible? And if I did show the disorderliness of our practice would that represent the responsible exercise of researcher authority in the participant-researcher relationship?

These questions were about the status of the transcript-texts. What were the texts and how I was to understand the relationships between those texts and the participants and myself? There were more questions about representation than there were readily available answers. The answers that had seemed clear to my counsellor-self before the research began or those that seem unproblematic to many discourse analytic researchers did not satisfy me. My author-ship was not to be at the cost of rendering other participants *objects of study*, yet the texts our project had produced had become my objects of study. Where do the people who produced the texts go, when the texts become the object of study, I asked. What happens to my relationship with other participants when I cannot but provide further re-interpretation in analysis and re-presentation? How much play could I find in the space between an understanding of the selves of the participants as essential and an understanding of participants as decentred participants in discourse? How would I work with the transcript-texts as moral goods?

I was not only worried by the question of the re-presentation of the *people*, my colleagues, who had first spoken the words that were now written down as transcript texts. I was also disturbed by what I experienced at first as the transcript-texts' incompleteness compared with the live conversations, the video-texts, and my memories of the live conversations. I will address in turn these two points: my concerns about representation and my sense of the incompleteness of the transcript-texts.

I wanted to remain in responsible and ethical relationship with those whose actions had produced the transcript-texts, even as I worked a particular interpretive overlay upon the texts. "It is *persons* [my emphasis] who actively employ their brains and hands as implements or tools for the work of thought and action" (Harré, 2000, p.744). The texts with which I was working were produced

by my colleagues, *persons* with whom I was and am in relation. In data analysis, suggested Parker,

> we need a complex humanism, a good deal of interpretation underpinned by theories that take power seriously and a critical reflexivity that is embodied and grounded in forms of practice. (1999c, p.34)

I did not think that a complex humanism was what I needed. But I was sure that if I was to "take power seriously" I could not but attend responsibly to how I re-produced the texts which arose out of the *lived speaking* of colleagues with whom I had worked in the inquiry group. As I discussed some aspects of this dilemma, as I then understood it, with participants in Research Meeting Three, Liz suggested

> Our voices are still there [as you continue with your research work], even though we're not.

I was part of the production of the texts under consideration; as I read them I also *hear* the voices that produced them. Thus the texts with which I engage are imbued with meanings beyond those I can re-present to readers who first *see* the texts and then, if the texts are heard, will *hear* them in ways they have not been heard before. At Research Meeting Three, Anne advised me

> It's also a really good learning process somehow, isn't it, looking at the meanings that we might carry forth [in our speaking] that are invisible or aren't that 'up front' in our language.

Anne was giving me permission to take up interpretive authority, to use the texts in ways that might not have been visible at that time as possibilities. At that meeting, too, Kate spoke to having faith in my "ethical and respectful stance". I do not take such faith lightly. Nor do I take lightly the task of theorising my choice of position in relation with the transcript-texts. While accepting that the transcript-texts are not the people who spoke them, I nonetheless hold that they must be used in ways that respect the integrity of those people who made the

production of transcript-texts possible in their professional conversations in this project. Thus a person:text ambivalence was always before me in my approach to analysis.

The second dilemma of re-presentation arose out of what I at first experienced as the incompleteness of the transcript-texts. To make analysis possible we use transcription into written mode (Parker, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1995). The recordings on audio and video and the transcribing meant that there had already been layers of translation before I took up the task of analysis: from spoken text, to audio and video text, to written texts which were worked up a number of times for some sort of 'accuracy' of re-presentation. However, the move from practitioner to analyst that I needed to make in my engagement with the transcript texts was not easily accomplished. It took me many readings and some video-viewings to understand the texts as *other than* mirrors of practice that could be appreciated or improved or developed or held up as models: my counsellor-and-supervisor-and teacher-self responded more readily than my researcher-self. Similarly, in Research Meeting Two when we watched video excerpts together, participants, too, tended to evaluate their practice as an instance of *their own practice* for what else might have been possible, rather than taking a more reflective, inquiring look at what was happening in an instance of the discourse practice of supervision. I have already noted Liz's comment during Research Meeting Two:

> What I'm seeing on the screen that I don't see reading [the transcript] is the struggle to make sense.

Liz's comment expressed the sense that much of the work that is going on in talk goes on in what is *around* the words. The work goes on, for example, in the ways in which meaning is conveyed by gesture; in the storylines that have been produced as part of the group culture and that are invoked by indirect reference; or in the general discursive context. In spoken conversation the work to produce meaning is done with more than spoken words. I was particularly vexed by the dissonance between written and spoken texts: my positioning as counsellor, familiar with oral-aural mode, meant that I read the transcriptions as 'lacking'. I

read them as lacking a sense of register, of tone, of intonation; they failed to pick up interruptions at times or the speed of speaking, or many speakers speaking together but not quite at once; they did not represent physical orientation of the conversational partners or the signals they gave each other about beginning and turn-taking and many other aspects of communication. For these signals tend to be read, to be part of spoken text, in what Shotter referred to as "immediate, precognitive and spontaneous, feelingful way(s)" in the "wordless responsive-responding to each other" of the dialogues of those "in living, embodied, responsive contact with each other's activities" (2000, p. 107). Shotter refers not only to gesture and so on, but particularly to the discursive context and what Bakhtin calls "answerability" (Shotter, p.111), responsiveness to the calls to us to respond in particular ways. Calls that were visible in live and embodied dialogue were not necessarily visible in the transcript texts with which I was now working.

While the transcript-texts echoed for me with the conversations from which they had been derived, they told of new and different conversations as I worked to produce an analysis. Whether I described the interaction or presented it in transcript form, I could not but accept that, far from being "true to the text" (a phrase from Parker [1999b, p.2] to which I shall return) of the original conversation, these transcript-texts were a different form of data, and the only form practicable in this context. Transcripts were more than translation: they were new and different texts.

The transcript-texts did not show many of the subtle and nuanced ways of relating (Shotter, 1996, p.51), beyond words, that we had employed as we spoke together and that we used to know how to go on in conversation. In not showing these aspects of the dialogue the transcript- texts interrupted those subtleties and nuances with which we were very familiar. What is important about this interruption is that it began to draw attention to and emphasise other aspects of subtlety and nuance not readily visible to us in the moments of our working. Anne had offered me authority to investigate and interpret these when she had said: *It's also a really good learning process somehow, isn't it, looking at the meanings that we might carry forth (in our speaking) that are invisible or aren't that 'up front' in our language.* Parker, in more poetic terms, suggested that

written text "allows us to bring into focus connotations that normally just twinkle at the margins of our consciousness" (1994, p.96). I began to understand that my interpretive position was not perhaps as difficult as I had thought. I could find a legitimate position from which to interrogate the transcript text when my investigation of the subtlety and nuance of those texts was in the cause of understanding practice differently in order to enhance practice. I would do that by calling attention to the discourse practices at work producing us as certain kinds of counsellors and supervisors and team members. And I could do that without reducing my colleague's words/actions to "discursive data for scientific dissection" (Martin, 1995). For there are many reasons why there is more to see than we are seeing moment by moment, even in reflective professional conversations. Calling on Wittgenstein, Shotter (1996) suggested a number of reasons for things being difficult to see in the moments of speaking: the familiarity of the lens one uses; the speed with which things go by; the inexpressibility of that which is going on in the background; a seeking for explanations at the level of the general rather than the specific. The reflecting team process, in opening supervision to collaborative research, offered us opportunities to see things other than through familiar lenses and to interrogate specific instances of practice; the transcript-texts offered further opportunity for slowing down, unpacking the familiar, working to express what was going on in the background, and to seek specific explanations. All this produced a deepened understanding for me of the import of a discursive approach. In Chapter One I pointed out the importance of the distinction that Davies drew: discourse, rather than identifying a speaker's "real nature", "has effects" (1998). I used this idea to theorise my engagement with the texts: participants were both colleagues, 'real' people whom I wanted to treat with respect, and they were participants in discourse practices. As they had participated in the research the vocabularies of action of particular supervision discourses had called them as counsellors or supervisors to particular positions (Crocket, 1998a, 1999a). Just as my analysis would not identify and diagnose the "real nature" of speakers, nor would it identify and diagnose what was "really going on" as we had spoken together. Rather, by attending to that which may have been "twinkling at the margins" or inexpressible in the moment I would be attending to the texts in new and different ways. My analysis would notice that which had not yet been noticed, and tell a

story that had not yet been told about it, and then offer that account to others for evaluation of its usefulness for practice. And, just as the presence of families to hear the reflections of a team helps guide professionals to speak respectfully, the sense of participants voices still being with me would support me to "take power seriously" and to exercise a "critical reflexivity" (Parker, 1999c, p.34), as I worked with the transcript texts.

In Chapters Seven to Eleven, I pay attention to subtlety and nuance in the transcript-texts as new and different texts from the live conversations and video and audio recordings from which they were produced. That attention does not undo the warmth and respect of the subtlety and nuance of understanding in the "live" texts that helped us to know how to go on with each other in the moment, and to produce the project with the satisfaction that we did. That account is one that I also carry with me, although it is not woven thoroughly into the visible layers of this document.

In approaching the transcript texts, as new and different texts, my looking has taken on new forms to read different nuances. I have looked through less familiar researcher lenses; time has been slowed, and texts have been read and reread and read again; background and foreground, margins and centre have been considered; and very local meanings have been held up alongside more general locations. And the transcript-texts have been investigated as instances of discourse practice while I have held in mind those who worked with me in the professional practice that generated the texts.

Some might argue that the sophisticated transcribing conventions of conversational analysis might have re-produced texts more representational of the subtlety and nuance of conversation than the bare, smoothed-out texts I have used. However, as I argued in Chapter Five the transcribing conventions of conversational analysis, that require familiarity for interpretation, would create greater accessibility problems for readers, particularly the counselling professionals whom I had set out to serve. Rather than "restoring" a sense of the spoken, they would generate yet another interpretive layer that would not serve my purpose. Further, texts that use conversational analysis transcribing

conventions are no more representational than the smoothed out texts that I have used: rather, each version emphasises different aspects of dialogue.

A discursive approach: situating this work

Discourse analysis tends to involve improvisation on the basis of the particular kinds of data texts one has to work with (Parker, 1999b; Phillips, 1999). To do discourse analysis is to employ a "craft skill", suggested Potter (1997): just as one rides a bike, one does discourse analysis by getting on and practising, responding to local road and traffic conditions, adjusting one's practice as one encounters the challenges of action, and adjusting one's practice depending upon the kind of bike one is riding. The task is more readily understood in the doing of it than in the describing of it. The emphasis of discourse analsyis, as with co-operative inquiry, is on action for action. Potter's analogy was a comparative one: discourse analysis was more like riding a bike than following a formulaic recipe, he suggested. (Those for whom the mild chicken rogan josh, to which Potter referred, is indigenous culinary practice might not make the distinction Potter made: all claims are situated.) There were no recipes nor even templates in discourse analytic literature that I might follow. My work, from *inside* counselling practice and with its direct emphasis on articulating effective practice and enhancing practice, was rather different from other discourse analytic studies (for example, Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Burman, 1996; Fairclough, 1992; 1995; Gunnarson, Linell, & Nordberg, 1997; Parker, 1994, 1999b; Potter, 1997; Willig, 1999b, 2000). Kogan and Gale pointed out the scarcity of material that examined the "management of talk" by postmodern therapists (1997, p.102), a point echoed by Weingarten (1998). Kogan and Gale's, and Drewery, Monk and Winslade's (2000) investigations of the management of talk in therapeutic processes used texts made from videotaped conference presentations by Michael White, and Drewery and McKenzie (1999) drew on texts selected from McKenzie's practice and written up in his masters thesis (McKenzie, 1993). The difference I want to draw attention to is that these texts (demonstrating therapeutic practice) were already in the public domain and were called upon by these authors to demonstrate particular points those authors wanted to make about therapy. In contrast, as a research study my analysis would decide what transcript-texts would be selected and put into the public domain; they were not available to be

otherwise selected from. Deciding not only to draw on exemplars of preferred practice, but to show, to edit *in*, some of the difficulties of practice was an ethical decision I made in response to the particular situation of this work as I improvised an approach to discourse analysis.

My study was further differentiated from other discourse analytic inquiry, both in the location in which the texts were generated and the purposes for which they were generated. Many inquiries study sites of structural inequality through the use of "forms of inquiry that are 'interrupters' of the social relations of dominance" (Lather, 1991, p.92). An emancipatory agenda (Willig, 1998, 1999a; Wodak, 1997) is behind the work of many researchers who put discourse analytic modes to work. The focus of researcher interest and analysis then appears to produce research from one of two stances. The first stance offers an investigation of the practices of power by which domination is produced and reproduced. The persons whose lives/practice become texts in this field might be said to be those who occupy the domina*ting* position: social worker in relation with client, for example in Hall, Sarangi, and Slembrouck's (1997) text. From the second stance, a researcher investigates effects of domination and resistances to domination and opens space for the voices of the domina*ted*, whose lives become the texts studied. Patai's study (1988, in Lather, 1991) of the lives of "ordinary Brazilian women" (Lather, p.93) might be an example of this second stance. Wodak suggested that critical discourse analysis intervenes "on the side of dominated and oppressed groups and against dominating groups" (1997, p.174).

To locate my work on one side or other of a *dominating-dominated* binary was not helpful. The power relations of supervision are very complex. While I claimed in Chapter Four that I chose to work with *ordinary* practitioners, the counsellors in my study were not *ordinary* in the way that Lather and Patai indicated. The relation of power between (professional) counsellor and client disturbs the ordinariness of counsellors; it does not, however, negate it completely. There is a relation of power between supervisor and counsellor that is intended, in its regulatory function, to moderate the relation of power between counsellor and client; supervision can do no more than moderate that relation of power. And in that moderating another relation of power exists, that between counsellor and

supervisor. In this project that power relation was disturbed through the rotation of roles in peer supervision, and by the research process itself. That process added other relations of power. My point is that supervision was not to be studied in only one dimension. In Chapter Three I showed how the literature has tended to construct the supervision relationship in such a way that the counsellor is in a subjected position: however, supervision was not to be studied simply for its regulatory function, for its use as a technology by which the counselling profession mediates the practice of its members, providing for the public, for funders, for employers, a "quality assurance" mechanism in its normative function. Although there is a relation of power between counsellor and supervisor, I would not simply study counsellors as a dominated group, who in supervision, a site of structural inequality, submit themselves to domination, to the professional gaze personified in the person of the supervisor. At the same time I did not want to be blind to the possible construction of supervision as a site wherein the profession conspires to shore up its dominance in respect to clients and others not present: counsellors cannot be studied in supervision only in a subjected position because of the power relations of their work with clients. And as the study has already shown it does not make theoretical sense to conceptualise supervision other than as a practice of power. However, its construction and production is complex. I understood supervision to be a complex site of contestation, an interdiscursive site of struggle to perform individual professional identity in dialogic relation, and an interdiscursive site of struggle for the performance of the profession's claims to professionalism. It was on these terms that I wanted to interrogate the transcript-texts, recognising that the transcript-texts were part of a study that had enabled me to conceive of supervision on these terms. There was a recursive relationship between the study and the terms on which it was produced.

A further distinction about forms of discourse analysis is perhaps more significant to this study, although I do not limit myself to its terms either. Rose (1998) presented this distinction in terms of an analytic focus on "language as communication" or "language as assemblage" (p.177). He argued that

> subjectification is not to be understood by locating it in a universe of meaning or an interactional context of narratives, but in a complex of apparatuses, practices, machinations, and assemblages within which human being has been fabricated, and which presuppose and enjoin particular relations with ourselves. (p.10)

According to this distinction there is a first set of discourse analytic approaches, allied with ethnography and conversational analysis that work at a local level and investigate instances of discourse practice, considering such questions as how talk is used to produce action and how identities are formed in talk. A second set emphasises what Rose refers to as political-constitutive aspects of language with its focus on systems of social practice in which power and knowledge are inextricably linked. Thus this set of discourse analytic approaches investigates the history of how a discourse has come to and comes to constitute particular objects and particular subjects, making explicit the relations of power in the social practices thus produced (Burr, 1995; Miller, 1997; Potter, 1997, Willig, 1999c, 2000.). Both sets of approaches offered interrogation of my transcript-texts that was productive. For, I argue, the improvisation of an approach depends in part on the purpose for which inquiry is undertaken. My interest was in supervision practice, and I did not see one set of approaches as exclusive of the other in informing supervision practice. The two approaches could be "mutually informative" (Miller, 1997, p.41) to answer my practice-focussed research questions.

> The question should not be, 'How does this version of deconstruction measure up against deconstruction?' but, 'What can this version of deconstruction accomplish?' (Jay, 1992, p.70).

An analysis that interrogated my transcript-texts both as instances of "language as assemblage" and as "language as communication", as political-constitutive action and as meaning-making action, offered a particular understanding for the practice of supervision. For that understanding interrupted the taken for granted place and work of supervision by investigating supervision-talk/transcript-texts in terms of assemblage. And at the same time it located that theorising in instances of

practice, demonstrating on practice terms in practice situations aspects of the management of supervision talk in the performance of professional identity. In employing both approaches to discourse analysis, I emphasised the ways each informs the other (Burkitt, 1999; Miller, 1997) on the basis that "individual sites of text" and "the broader context of text*uality*" (Lowe, 1999, p.79, original emphasis) are each produced by the other.

Engaging with transcript texts

To construct the readings I go on to offer as this account continues, I had engaged in lengthy preliminary analyses. Potter pointed out that preliminary analyses have more to do with managing the quantity of data, that codings given in preliminary analyses are regarded as provisional, and that discourse analytic work is unconstrained about the inclusion or exclusion of particular extracts (1997, p.158). As I began I engaged in a preliminary analysis both across and within the transcript texts. Having read and reread the transcript-texts and reviewed the videotapes, I began annotating individual transcripts in a spontaneous way in response to points of interest as I read. At that point my focus was practice, particularly the constructionist practice of my first research question, and I was particularly interested in practices that might be reproduced as exemplars. Overall, these first annotations were guided by the question: what questions, or answers, for practice does this (instance of interest) raise, and how might I theorise these questions, or answers? As I read I noted such moves as how supervision agendas were introduced by counsellors; links between the personal and the professional in supervision talk; positioning of counsellor and supervisor in relation. Once all the texts had been read, I re-read them one after another, this time gathering together common themes under headings such as ethics; different theories and different conversations; speaking about clients. When that series of readings had been completed, across all supervision texts I considered, for example, how supervision agendas were presented and negotiated; and within each text I observed the detail of negotiation as counsellor and supervisor worked to navigate towards common points of dialogue (Shotter, 1996) to construct a shared sense of purpose for their meeting. I had proposed that a storying therapy invokes a storying supervision, that constructionism could produce supervision as a storying of professional identity and practice as practice and identity each

produced the other. I considered the ways in which this proposition was played out or disconfirmed in the practice of and ideas about supervision in the transcript texts. In this way I considered how supervision was being constructed – what discourses of supervision were being reproduced and produced in the practice?

Amongst all this preliminary analysis, I also took particular note of the analytic work already done within the inquiry group over the course of the year. Particularly as I worked with the transcript-texts of the three Research Meetings and the texts of the Reviews structured into the regular team meetings, I read also for the meta-discursive commentaries that participants made on supervision practice. For in these particular texts participants had taken interpretive authority as co-researchers, interested to produce constructionist supervision practices and reflect on local supervision practices. Some participants worked to use the same kinds of theoretical resources in the production of the data as I used in the analysis of the data. These metadiscursive commentaries were also gathered together; I have at times brought forward the interpretive authority of participants as I developed the accounts that follow. Where possible I have used instances of practice to illustrate participants' interpretations.

Earlier in this chapter I wrote of my hopes for exemplars of constructionist supervision practice. When supervision transcripts appeared to offer such exemplars, I examined them in some detail, paying attention to the linguistic aspects of the transcript-texts. How was constructionist supervision being produced in the language practices being employed? How were social relations being shaped in linguistic practices? Similarly I paid particular attention to the linguistic aspects of those transcript-texts where there was misunderstanding evident. Parker suggested that discourse analysis is "characterised by a sensitivity to language above any 'steps' to analysis" (1999b, p.2). A sensitivity to language was present in each of the steps in the layers of readings with which I interrogated the transcript-texts. I describe now those theoretical tools on which I draw in producing an analysis of the linguistic aspects of transcript texts, both those that were more oriented to a political-constitutive analysis and those that were more oriented to the "communicative" aspects.

Examining constitution

The tools of analysis that produced a political-constitutive reading are those that have been introduced in Chapters One and Two and used since then: discourse, positioning, subjectivity, power/knowledge, agency. The transcript-texts were interrogated with the help of a series of deconstructive questions, based on these tools.

- What sort of supervision practice is being called upon here? (What sort of a 'thing' is supervision as it is enacted here?)
- As what sort of practice is supervision being enacted?
- What sort of subject is called into being in this practice?
- What discursive practices are being employed as strategies to call that subject into being?
- What are the effects of these strategies for the kinds of subjectivity that are possible? What kinds of positions are available?
- If these particular subjectivities are being produced, what relational practices are called forth?
- How do these relations shape supervision? What kind of supervision (object) do these relations produce?

In their circularity these questions make use of the idea that people are active participants in the reproduction *and* in the production of discourse practices. While I did not see myself as having the *emancipatory* agenda of which Willig (1998, 1999a) wrote, I was seeking out what I already understood to be the life-blood of ethical practice: strategies that invoke counsellor agency and strategies that make explicit the practices of power by which both the therapy and the current supervision conversation were being shaped.

- What effects does this practice or this construction of supervision have for counsellor agency, in supervision or in counselling? How does this practice work to produce the counsellor in positions of ethical relation?
- How does this practice pay attention to the terms of its own construction?
- How does this practice pay attention to the forms of relationship it produces?

In interrogating the transcript-texts in these ways, I called on some particular tools and strategies that helped me focus on and describe the linguistic properties of the transcript-texts that performed the actions I was investigating.

Dialogue

The metaphor of dialogue was one I found useful in an analytic emphasis on the transcript-texts as supervision talk. The dialogical metaphor emphasises that positioning is always positioning *in relation*, and that speaking is always in relation.

> All single voices are extracted from dialogues, as Bakhtin teaches us (Bruner, 1991, p.xii).

The dialogic metaphor draws on Bakhtin's work in literary theory; in constructionist psychology it has been particularly articulated by Shotter (1989, 1996, 2000).

> By reacting to the actions of others our replies are never wholly our own; in being always both reactions to their 'calls' and to the larger circumstances in which they occur they are half 'shaped' by influences beyond our control. Thus, in such 'joint' or 'relational' circumstances, no outcomes can be wholly attributed to the desires or plans of individuals involved, nor can they be attributed wholly to outside agencies. [...] For in joint action [...] we have between us to 'dance' or to 'navigate' toward the common point of our dialogue and toward our 'positions' in relation to it and to each other. (Shotter, 1996, p. 8)

Speech and dialogue are action: invitations are offered and accepted or rejected as we find our ways forward in conversation. Invitations may be noticed and rejected, or they might not be accessible and therefore refused. We find our ways about, toward a common point or not, by taking readings from and interpreting points of reference in the changing landscape, and on charts and maps and texts of various kinds. Metaphorical charts, maps and texts are revised, redrawn and

rewritten as we go, and their meanings negotiated. Dialogue takes the form of joint action: both, or many, speakers are working at the navigating, recognising the co-production of the endeavour. In the analysis of instances of practice I considered the invitations offered, taken up and refused in making sense of our efforts at producing dialogue.

A further aspect of dialogical theory that I found useful in working with the transcript-texts also derives from the work of Bakhtin. He drew a distinction between language that has been *dialogized*, its meanings interrogated and destabilised, and *undialogized* language that retains an absolute authority. He suggested that *authoritative discourse* demands acknowledgement and adherence to its terms, terms about which negotiation is not possible. *Internally persuasive discourse*, on the other hand, suggested Bakhtin, is always dialogical: "the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's" (1981, p.345). I have used the idea of dialogising to write about particular textual processes. Although clearly there are similarities between dialogising and deconstruction, dialogising emphasises the work that is going on at the level of words to negotiate how meaning is being made. *Dialogising*, as I have employed it, brings attention to the intentional crafting of language in instances of talk, while recognising that we can be only partially in control of meaning, for we speak within the terms of discursive practices. "Who speaks and under what conditions he speaks: this is what determines a word's actual meaning" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.401). My interest in dialogue is taken alongside an understanding that discursive practices position us in relations of power. Language is political. The language we use in speaking in and about supervision is political. The tools of analysis I employed in this project investigate language as political and communicative: they are in themselves political.

Linguistic tools for producing speaking positions

I considered the production of speaking positions, and of the professional speaking positions, produced by particular linguistic tools that were at work in transcript-texts. The metaphor of navigation brings with it that of the spaces to be navigated in the talk. Spatial metaphors have already been in use in this document: discursive *positioning* is a concept introduced in Chapter One. A

person who is *positioned* in discourse occupies a particular *subject space* or *site*. They are said to speak from a *location* in the text (Kogan & Gale, 1997, p.112) and those who speak in response may offer confirmation of that location or draw attention to other locations available for taking up. Kogan and Gale, in their analysis of the management of talk, drew attention to the matter of what is *centred* in (therapist) speaking. "The center of a text is the story being told, the margins are the story left untold," they suggested (1997, p.106). Deconstruction pays attention to that which is pushed to the margins, absent or obscured. Using the idea of conversational space, I considered texts for the ways in which they had been crafted, and the particular linguistic tools that had been employed, to produce dialogical space, and to produce speaking positions of particular sorts. Just as speaking is from a location in the text, speaking draws attention to locations in the text, or attention away from locations in the text. I investigated how this happened in particular transcript-texts, looking at the surface of the grammar (Fairclough, 1995, p.147) just as I had with the literature I discussed in Chapter Three. For example, I considered the use of pronouns in the transcript-texts, particularly for the forms of professional agency constructed by pronoun use. Shotter (1989) drew attention to the work that the grammatical second person pronoun does to shape and craft relations. When a speaker addresses their dialogical partner as *you* they highlight the location in the text where their partner, in responding, might be positioned as a subject*ive* subject, as the speaker and agent of an account. An invitation to a storying, authoring position is thus offered, a position that highlights the subjective subject position that a speaker is offered and might take up in their responding. In contrast, speaking that employs nominalisation, "the conversion of a clause into a nominal" (Fairclough, 1992, p.27), obscures the agency of the speakers. Nominalisation is thus also shaping of social relations. I investigated the effects and implications of nominalisation in particular sites in the transcripts. In the example I offer in Chapter Eleven the counsellor uses *Narrative* as a nominalisation that I suggest obscures her agency in her practice. As I argued in the literature review in Chapter Three, the surface of the grammar of sentences can draw our attention to the kinds of subjects we are called to assemble ourselves as. The analyses that I report in the following chapters pay attention to the words spoken in dialogue for their significance in producing social and power relations in the playing out of discursive practices in

supervision. The tools used to describe the linguistically-focussed analyses came not from a series of questions overlaid upon all transcript-texts, but rather were "true to the text" (Parker, 1999b, p.2) in that they were derived in response to each particular transcript-text itself. The details of the tools were not predetermined, but produced in response to the texts.

Presenting text

I have already noted that the analysis and accounts I present here in part draw on the interpretive authority of participants: the research design was structured for multi-level conversations that gave inquiry group members analytic positions during the data-generating phase of the project. I have made visible in the account that follows, in Chapters Seven to Eleven, where I have particularly brought forward the participants' interpretive authority. Changes in font have been used to differentiate between conversations that were supervision conversations, and conversations that were Review and Research Meeting conversations. The style will be evident as the chapters proceed, as supervision conversations (in a distinguishing font) are each introduced and their location in the project indicated. (Appendix VI offers an overview of the texts on which I have drawn). Quotations from transcript-texts are mostly distinguished by the use of indents. When indents are not used, quotes from transcripts are italicised. As an additional aid to readers I have presented each extract from supervision conversations, without my commentary, on the left-hand side of the page alongside the extract and commentary in the ongoing narrative.

The naming processes I have used in the chapters that follow also draw attention to the two classes of text with which I have worked, texts produced in supervision-in-action and texts produced in research-on-practice. In the re-presentation of conversations extracted from Research and Review transcript-texts consistent names, chosen by participants, have been used: Anne, Clare, Kate and Liz. Pseudonyms have been used for a number of reasons including the importance of protecting the privacy of counselling clients. When re-presenting supervision conversations, however, I have used a random selection of names, telling each extract of supervision practice in a new set of names. This naming practice emphasises the discursive conditions of supervision practice and de-

emphasises the particular person who is speaking (Kogan & Gale, 1997). I chose to use a random selection of *names* rather than *Counsellor/Supervisor* as a compromise, to live out a dialogic and relational understanding of subjectivity and recognising that the work calls on the embodied actions of my colleagues. Thus, the naming practices I used both disturb the possibilities for identification in a small community and produce an emphasis on discursive production. I retain some discomfort that this decision means that participants are not recognised and acknowledged, by being named in this document, for their contributions. However, on balance I decided that protecting privacy, particularly for clients, was a higher priority. My preference is to acknowledge how the work of others has contributed to my thinking. However, it has turned out that this research project was not set up in such a way that the use of participants' own names would be unproblematic.

In the chapters that follow I have maintained a practice orientation, having selected for attention both from those aspects of the project that have served my ongoing supervision practice well, and from those that have continued to disturb and trouble me and for which I have continued to seek answers. I have focussed most deliberately on the first two of my research questions as the data most directly addresses those questions. In any case, to tell the whole story of the research project is impossible, for such a story could not ever be complete.

> There is no means by which a fixed collection of words, sewn between inert covers, can encompass the issues in all their complexities. (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p.3)

Nonetheless, the choices I have made and make to collect and select and write words and have them sewn between covers are important ones. The task of describing the research process is not complete until the writing, too, is theorised.

> The final story must fit the events while at the same time bringing an order and meaningfulness that was not necessarily apparent in the event as it happened. (Polkinghorne, 1997, p.15)

In the course of constructing analyses and with thoughts of constructing a final-for-now account I grappled with a further set of questions as I found my way to authorship. What is this thesis document in relation with the research project of which it is part? Which aspects of the research project do I privilege in giving this account – for inevitably I privilege some above others? For example, how much attention do I give to *reporting* the instrumental actions of the research project and how much to documenting the dilemmas of the project's production? In what ways should I draw on the data-texts? What realities should I produce in my efforts in re-presentation?

Thinking about the connections between the lived experience of the project and the written accounts I might offer, I was reminded of Carl Rogers' comments, when someone had written a chapter of a book about his theory of personality.

> They were kind enough to send me the chapter in regard to my theory in advance of publication, and I guess I hurt their feelings by writing back that, "I wouldn't say that there were many misstatements of fact in the chapter, it's just that reading the whole thing left me terribly depressed." It left me terribly depressed because here was everything all cut and dried, and hell, it had never seemed that way to me. It would seem as though, well out of all the possibilities this might be one possible explanation. But no, when it comes out, especially second hand like that, it is all a nicely packaged thing with everything closed. (Frick, 1971, p. 101)

Everything is not cut and dried, yet reporting and writing and printing and dissemination can make it appear so. Epston, referring to writing in the form of therapeutic letters, wrote

> the words in a letter don't fade and disappear the way conversation does; they endure through time and space, bearing witness to the work of therapy and immortalizing it. (1994, p.31)

In different ways, both Rogers' and Epston's words remind me of the responsibility I have in writing, printing and submitting this document: these words in these pages, in bearing witness to the work of this research project, constitute an on-the-record version that will endure. The immortalising takes place at a particular time in the production that is the project, and from the position I occupy as writer, and as writer of a doctoral thesis. Writing has performative powers (Penn & Frankfurt, 1994, p.230). This document stories the professional work of the inquiry group in particular ways, and for that I take responsibility.

I recognise that participants in the inquiry group may experience, as Rogers did, a dissonance in reading this account – though I hope they will not be depressed! While the supervision and research conversations that provided the data for this thesis will have in some ways been immortalised in their inclusion in the pages that follow, I emphasise that the reflecting team supervision work thus re-presented was work that at that time we put forward in a spirit of inquiry, of trying out, of experimentation. We were interested to bring our practices forward. The practice was not "cut and dried", and for all of us, our work, our practice and our thinking about our practice, has moved on since that time. The words of one participant, Liz, note this phenomenon.

> This is a dynamic on-going thing, that can keep developing and changing too.
> [...]
> The deconstructing questions and the collaborative way of working, it allows for expansion all the time, and changes in thinking.

Thus, as Bird (2000) claimed that transcripts are fictions in that they are made up from a record of a conversation, the re-presentations I offer here might also be

said to be fictions. I am making up this account, constructing it out of the material resources the conversations have become in their transcript-text form. I am taking responsibility for giving order, shape and meaning to an account that is one of many that could be made up from these data. I offer here, in Rogers' words, "one possible explanation".

The writing in this work is not a therapeutic letter (Epston's focus), the purpose of which is to faithfully bear witness to conversation (and thereby provide an ennobling account of a life lived). Rather, the purpose of this document is as a forum of accountability for me as researcher. I have argued elsewhere for accountability in supervision to be construed as the ability to give an account (Crocket, 1999a). My tasks have changed with changing phases of the research project. My task now in writing here is to present myself as a researcher who can produce research of which I can give sufficient account and which in its process and its ongoing production is meaningful for professional counselling practice, and is in ethical relation with practice. The account in this thesis is also partial in this way: it could be said that in the same way as supervision functions as the counselling profession's assurance of effective and ethical counselling practice in the service of clients, so the presentation of this thesis is about ensuring that quality and ethical research is available to the counselling community. In this account I work to offer a meaningful account of my (research) practice, in order to produce myself as an effective author of, and servant of, that practice.

In Chapter Three in giving an account of supervision, I left unexamined the matter, given attention by a number of writers in the field, of where the client of counselling is in relation to supervision. It is an important ethical matter, for it is not the client, but the counsellor, who is called to give an account in supervision. Bird (1994) provided a reminder about the need for respectfulness in professional speaking, a respectfulness which I believe includes the supervision room. She suggested for example that therapists not speak about clients in objectifying ways, but as though clients were present to overhear the conversation. In supervision it is the counsellor, not the client, who is called to give an account; in this thesis it is I, not the counsellors and supervisors who participated in the earlier stages of the project, who is called to account. It behoves me, then, to provide an account

which demonstrates professional respectfulness as well as academic rigour. The knowledge claims I come to make are conclusions whose meaning is dependent upon the actions I have taken over time, in engaging with others in the practices of the inquiry group, with the transcript-texts, with the literature, and with the professional field of practice. These meanings, however, are dependent upon the knowledge and practice offered to me by the inquiry group members. Nonetheless, I ask readers to recognise that it is my re-presentation that is to be evaluated here, not my colleagues' contributions. These are moral goods, these accounts I am about to present. They depend upon analytic actions taken mindful of the professional and personal relationships and the relations of power that produced both the discursive data upon which I draw, and upon my positioning here as writer.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has continued to account for the ethical terms on which this study was produced, in particular its emphasis on the relations of knowledge production. It describes my positioning in relation with the transcript texts, clarifying in particular the theoretical understandings about discourse and positioning that enabled me to engage with the texts from an ethical analytic stance. Discourse analysis has been introduced as a practice of improvisation: the improvisations I produced for this analysis have been outlined. Finally, the chapter has situated this document, the written account of the project, and has noted its contingency.

Chapter Seven

Supervision and the discourse of supervisor responsibility

Introduction

This chapter considers in particular the discourse of supervisor responsibility. I drew attention to this discourse in Chapters Three and Four, highlighting its pervasiveness even in those contexts where its terms are not directly invoked and noting the relational positions it produced for counsellors and supervisors. In this chapter, I use the data to explore the positions in relation, for counsellor and supervisor, produced by and producing a discourse of supervisor responsibility. Data are also used to offer examples of the discourse practices of this genre of supervision discourse.

Data from four sets of conversations are used for this exploration:

1. Reflections on supervision processes made in team discussion during Phase Four of each reflecting team supervision conversation;
2. The Reviews of the project we held every third session;
3. The Research Meetings held on three occasions during the year;
4. The fortnightly reflecting team supervision meetings.

During the year in which the team met I did not focus my own attention or the group's attention on the discourse of supervisor responsibility in the particular ways I have done in this document. I came to understand and name that discourse as part of the subsequent analysis: thus the group's comments and commentaries offered in this chapter did not come in direct response to particular questions I had asked about that discourse. Rather, many of the examples I draw on in the following pages were invoked as participants worked to describe the shifts in their understandings of supervision that were produced as the project proceeded. The project in this way produced a group and research culture that at times used *difference* to help us describe what we were reaching for. As we named that which was or had been present in supervision we came to identify more clearly that which was absent or unaccounted for or yet to be produced more fully or

named more clearly. And as we articulated that for which we were reaching, the effects of previously familiar practices became more visible. Such a process in some ways reflects a Derridean approach to deconstruction, one that occurred here in relatively unsophisticated ways in the to and fro of conversation that was not purposefully deconstructive. While I do not think that participants would all have named what they were doing as deconstruction, I am claiming an effect of the group's exploratory conversations can be understood as deconstructive action. In this chapter, participants' comments and commentaries, from the first three sites, are a focus for my purposeful deconstructive attention as I present the data that renders visible the discourse of supervisor responsibility. Having established the authority of the participants' contributions, I then use an example from the supervision texts, the fourth site, to explore further the practices produced on the terms of that discourse.

The construction of the supervision relationship

Counsellor positioning

Commentaries on the positioning of counsellors in supervision were offered both in the course of exploring earlier supervision experiences and in offering critique of those experiences. Speaking of her early knowledge of supervision, Clare said that she understood that as a counsellor

> you were to take, you were to consider everything you had done that you wished you had done better.

Similarly, Anne suggested that counsellors were positioned in supervision discourse as

> coming and telling of your shortcomings and your failings.

Images of supervision as confession are evoked by these descriptions: the counsellor is positioned as supplicant. Supervision is produced as a problem-focussed activity, where shortcomings are acknowledged and responded to.

Positions in relation

In relation with the counsellor positioned as supplicant, the supervisor is positioned as the authority responsible for *putting right*. She had understood, reported Kate, that

> they [the supervisor] will put me right [because] they know what they are doing.

Kate's understanding was produced within a discourse where authority and responsibility are vested in the person of the supervisor. The counsellor assembles herself as a subject to be *put right*: the supervisor is assembled as omniscient and responsible. Similarly, Liz commented on the construction of the supervision relationship as a reciprocal one of *reporting in* and *checking up*. *Reporting in*, the counsellor is positioned to offer a particular relational call to the supervisor who exercises regulatory authority and responsibility in their *checking up*. Kate's words as she spoke of herself as *the supervised person* demonstrate the effects of regulatory authority: the counsellor becomes the object of supervision practice, subject to examination. By submitting to processes of confession and examination one partner in supervision is *supervised* while the other *knows* and *puts right*.

Relational practices: providing instruction

In the reciprocal relation of *putting right* and *being put right*, supervisor and counsellor are positioned as having quite different tasks and roles in supervision: one is to *report in* to a higher authority, while the other as a higher authority is responsible for *putting right* through the use of their knowledge in instruction. In the light of their not knowing and needing to be *put right*, the counsellor will be given instruction about *what to do next*, according to Kate. In this discursive regime knowledge is thus directed towards instrumental action: the supervisor instructs the counsellor on what they should next do in their counselling work The effect of the counsellor's positioning in the subjected *being put right* position of this discourse is that their counselling work is dependent upon the supervisor's knowledge: counselling happens as the counsellor reproduces the supervisor's knowledge offered as instruction. By these strategies, both counselling and

supervision are constructed on instrumental terms: supervision is about instructing the counsellor on *what to do next* in counselling, for the supervisor knows more than the counsellor. They know *the right things I could do*, and will tell the counsellor what those are, as Kate represented the supervisor's positioning in this discourse. The knowledge needed for the situation, for *right practice* is already in existence, held in the person of the supervisor. Such knowledge can be transferred unproblematically from supervisor to counsellor to client, according to the terms of this discourse.

Relational practice: exercising responsibility

A reciprocal *putting right* and *being put right* relation constructs supervisors in positions of sole responsibility. Positioned in this way supervisors are to act upon counsellors, the *supervised persons*. Needing to be *put right*, counsellors are absent from positions of authority or responsibility. Kate's reflections on her earlier experiences of supervision continued as she spoke of her positioning in this way:

> To a large extent, I gave the decision-making about how the supervision would be to the supervisor; I didn't really make a lot of demands. Maybe I didn't know what to ask for.

Kate's words make visible the unilateral construction of the supervision relationship. It would seem that Kate, like the counsellors in Carroll's (1996) study and of whom Kaiser (1997) wrote, had not been well prepared to engage in supervision. The supervisor would both put the counsellor right, and make the decisions about how the supervision would be enacted. Kate continued:

> And I guess I assumed, and gave away the deciding of, I guess I sort of gave away the deciding about what should be in the supervision contract to the supervisor, rather than take responsibility for that. I would think, "Well, okay, if I have forgotten something then the supervisor will put me right about that. They know what they're doing anyhow because they have supervised a lot of people. Therefore it's okay if I'm not too sure, or not too demanding, or not too anything, because they know what they're

doing." So I was actually putting them in that superior or authoritative role.

Kate was here locating the problem in her individual action: according to this account the action of a counsellor as a sovereign individual was responsible for the supervisor being in an authoritative position. However, on the terms of the theoretical position I am taking, the counsellor (like the supervisor) acted out of a discursively produced position within the discourse of supervisor responsibility. That discourse reproduced what might be called a relation of reassuring paternalism between counsellor and supervisor. Because expertise is constructed as residing in the supervisor, out of their previous experience in supervision - *because they have supervised a lot of people* - the counsellor can be reassured that the supervisor can make good any counsellor deficit, any forgetting by the counsellor. In the face of supervisor expertise, a counsellor will not be subject to too many expectations – she won't have to be *too sure*, or *too knowing* or be expected to know what to ask for, or *too anything* at all. *Too anything* at all?: the counsellor is positioned as almost absent, not sure, not speaking, not visible, scarcely present, a subject positioned at the edges of a discourse of supervisor responsibility.

However, within a discourse of supervisor responsibility this positioning of the counsellor is not necessarily as problematic as my last comment suggests. For the supervision relationship is also here constructed as paternal and protective. Under the watchful eye of a supervisor a counsellor is not alone, but has the support of another, more senior person, who will not only *put the counsellor right* to prevent any mistakes, but will also provide *back up* should the counsellor go on and make a mistake. The safety for clients and reassurance for the counsellor, who is positioned as a beginner by such developmental constructions, is demonstrated in Kate's next comment. Kate had said, in Research Meeting Three, that she had put the supervisor in *that superior or authoritative role:* in response I asked her whether that had come about from a particular sort of training in supervision or out of a lack of training in supervision or in some other way. Kate responded:

> At the beginning, I wanted and needed to have a more senior counsellor to watch me for, say, for ages. And then I don't think I ever changed my attitude. I think that I came in with that idea, "Good, you know, okay, this woman is going to be supervising me, if I stuff up anywhere I'm going to have a back up".

The supervisor is positioned as an ever-vigilant *back up* upon whom client safety and counsellor security depends as a relation of protection and paternalism plays out in supervision. The supervisor's knowing and experience will enable appropriate intervention in the face of the counsellor's not knowing, and ensure the safety of both clients and counsellor, for the supervisor functions as an assurance of responsible action. *They know what they are doing*, said Kate. The counselling profession's claims for professionalism in practice depend upon the location of vigilance, expertness, and responsibility in the supervisor. The work of the supervision relationship is produced under the mantle of supervisor responsibility.

Supervision is thus constructed as one of what Gergen called "the family of cultural rituals in which the ignorant, the failing, and the weak seek counsel from the wise, the superior, and the strong" (1997, pp.239-240). "It is indeed," he continued, "a comforting ritual for all who will submit". Supervision, on these terms, is a professional ritual in which a more senior, wiser colleague watches and *puts right* a junior, more ignorant colleague.

Relational practice: providing expertise

Although much of my focus here has been on Kate's voice, she was not the only participant to have experienced relations of dependency upon counsellor authority and knowledge in supervision. Liz, too, spoke about her experience of supervision working in this way in the early days of her practice as a counsellor in a voluntary agency.

> ...like you said, counselling via the supervision. [...] And it was like we kept running back to the supervisor saying, "What do I do now?" So it was very much expecting the supervisor to take that expert position. My

> first supervisor declined to take that position, but even so he was a senior psychologist so I couldn't help but position him in that way anyway so my positioning never changed.

Liz drew attention to the work of the supervisor in prescribing the actions the counsellor should take next with their client: *counselling via the supervision.* The counsellor is the medium for actions in counselling prescribed by the supervisor. Indirectly, it is the supervisor who counsels the client. As well, the words, *running back to the supervisor*, evoke a child-like position of dependency. Those who do not know, Gergen's "ignorant", are dependent upon the wisdom of others for their own professional actions. A discourse of supervisor responsibility had offered both Kate and Liz positions where not knowing and dependence were more accessible to them than professional knowledge and professional autonomy. Their status as beginners had offered them such positions, and they were further spoken into those positions by the instructional practices of a discourse of supervisor responsibility. A discourse of supervisor responsibility and developmental discourse thus work to shore each other up.

Relational practice: workload monitoring

Earlier in the project Clare had spoken about her experience of supervisor positioning in responsibility for monitoring a counsellor's workload. In Research Meeting One we were drawing comparisons between the group supervision process in the reflecting team and individual supervision. Clare suggested that in our group she felt less sense of responsibility than she felt in individual supervision in her private practice. For example, in one to one supervision monitoring involved her knowing for each counsellor

> what their workload is like at the moment, the kind of issues they are presented with, whether it is skewed at the moment.

Clare went on to say that she felt *an incredible sense of responsibility as a supervisor.* As the conversation moved on, Liz asked her what effects knowing a counsellor's workload had for how she worked. Clare replied,

> I guess I feel like I am 'it' and I have a responsibility to monitor [the counsellor's workload].

She went on to say that she had

> more of a responsibility [in one-to-one supervision] because I am 'it', and that I have to know, that if anyone said, "Tell me about your work with X" – I know ethically I wouldn't do that – that I should be able to answer them.

Possible surveillance of the counsellor's work and also of her work as a supervisor requires Clare to know about counsellor workload. She must know as she is produced as responsible to authorities - professional bodies, perhaps - who might ask her to give an account of the work of supervision. There are echoes of the *reporting in* and *checking up* positions of which Liz spoke. Again, Clare repeated

> It is different when you are 'it'.

According to the description offered here responsibility is unilateral: the supervisor is *it*. Responsibility in supervision is centred on the supervisor.

I was particularly interested in the construction of the supervisor as responsible for work-load monitoring. I had encountered this practice only in social work supervision literature and in some counselling practicum placements. When I asked Clare about how she had come to take up this practice, she reported that she had always assumed that workload monitoring was a part of supervision. Although she wasn't sure of the source of her assumption, it had always been a part of her supervision as a counsellor.

> As a supervisee, I have a responsibility to tell them [the supervisor, about my workload] every few sessions.

As a supervisor herself, she said that she was active in asking counsellors questions about their workloads: it was a supervision activity she initiated. Clare

suggested, for example, that she would take the initiative to ask a counsellor who had a *heavy load of ACC work* [counselling in the area of sexual abuse, funded by an insurer] about the current ratio of their workload: she was currently aware of the make-up of the workload of all those with whom she was supervisor. This knowledge would enable her to take responsible action for which she could give account if called to do so.

Producing responsibility in supervision

The matter of supervisor responsibility in supervision is a very complex one. Counselling is responsible work and does call counsellors and supervisors to express responsibility. It is not surprising, in an endeavour that engages in people's lives as counselling does, that counsellors and those who work with them in supervision carry a burden of responsibility, as Clare did as a supervisor. I raised the question in earlier chapters whether a discourse of supervisor responsibility, that centres responsibility on supervisors, best serves counsellors to exercise responsibility in their counselling work. For that is the purpose of supervision, to enhance the effectiveness and ethical standards of the counselling counsellors offer to clients. The descriptions of the positioning of counsellor and supervisor in relation, which are offered by these data excerpts, suggest that within a discourse of supervisor responsibility the position of responsible professional is more readily accessible to supervisors than it is to counsellors. Counsellors are in danger of *stuffing up*; as *beginners* they depend upon the supervisor's knowledge and instruction. Both Kate and Liz spoke about being recruited into the belief that *the supervisor knows best* in being positioned as beginning counsellors: *at the beginning I wanted and needed to have a more senior counsellor to watch me,* Kate said. A supervision relation that privileges supervisor knowledge had gained ground, under cover of developmental constructions that had positioned Kate and Liz as unknowing beginning counsellors. However, a dominant supervisor responsibility discourse had persisted beyond that time: the positions that had once appeared to offer reassurance and security had in many ways endured. *My positioning never changed*, said Liz.

Relational practice: suspicious paternalism

A discourse of supervisor responsibility positions counsellors as unknowing, both about counselling and about supervision. The positioning of counsellors as unknowing has effects on the supervision relationship, including a suspicious paternalism that Clare expressed concern about. Clare reported having attended a supervision course where, she said, the leader had suggested:

> the things that people are not bringing [to supervision] are often the things they need to talk about.

Clare was concerned about the relationship and climate of distrust such a construction sets up: supervisors cannot trust counsellors to bring to supervision what they need to, and counsellors cannot trust themselves to know what they need to bring. As well, supervisor and counsellor are offered a relation of mutual non-disclosure when they act out of the positions offered within this discursive regime. If the counsellor (unknowingly or knowingly) excludes the most pertinent areas of their work from the open space of the supervision conversation, the supervisor (with knowingness, but without the agreement of the counsellor) must work to flush out into the open that which has not been overtly presented. Trust is undermined within a discourse of supervisor responsibility that positions a counsellor as unknowing in this way. Again, images of examination and surveillance are invoked: the emphasis is on producing a supervision wherein supervisor and counsellor are positioned to take up very different roles and tasks. Supervisor expertise is enhanced by this construction, and with the enhancement of their expertise comes the enhancement of their responsibility. Counsellors are offered positions of diminished and diminishing responsibility. Paternalism thus reproduces and is reproduced within the counsellor-supervisor relation, but a somewhat suspicious paternalism.

Noticing paternalistic relations: accommodating to instrumental practice

As the authority of the *supervisors know best* regime continued to be played out in supervision in the earlier experiences of which participants spoke, it became less comforting and less comfortable for those positioned as unknowing. Kate and Liz

each described a different response they had made as they each noticed the effects of the positionings offered them as counsellors.

Liz said that she had accommodated to a supervisor by setting an agenda that would join with the supervisor's preferred practice.

> And then, with my next supervisor, just because of the different theoretical approaches, I chose what I would take because of ... different theoretical approaches. And sometimes thinking, "Well I won't take anything theoretical because that would be too problematic for our relationship. I'll just take a client; to take a client will be simple". And so I would sometimes choose not to discuss theoretical things, and for her it seemed like the best way that supervision worked was if I brought a problem and we talked about it. So that that was the framework that she seemed to come from and work on for supervision.

There are a number of threads here that interest me. Theoretical differences compromised the supervision agenda: the counsellor selected those items for the supervision agenda that would meet with the supervisor's preference. It was the counsellor doing the accommodating, keeping the work of supervision *simple* by taking up the supervisor's preferred frame. That frame required the counsellor to bring a problem in the form of client work. In that requirement the frame disallowed the discussion of theoretical things: to speak of theory would require speaking of difference and that was too problematic for the supervision relationship, according to Liz's account. Together these threads suggest a supervision space where the talk tends to be instrumental talk with a focus on problem solving – giving advice, information, opinions and suggestions (Martin, Goodyear, & Newton, 1987). The supervision appeared to be focussed on supporting the counsellor for instrumental action in her client work, rather than supporting the counsellor to theorise her work. No longer positioned to *run back to the supervisor* for advice on what to do next, Liz appeared to be seeking positions in supervision that could offer her responsibility for theorising her practice. However, it appears that the focus of supervision continued to be reproduced as instrumental action. Supervision as instrumental action employs an

instructional process that refers to the instrumental action that the counsellor will reproduce in counselling. In this way, instrumentality positions the supervisor in a position of expertise both in relation with the counsellor and in relation with the client.

Liz's distinction between *taking a client* and *taking something theoretical* to supervision draws attention to the positioning of the supervisor in authority over the work of the counsellor and the work in supervision. Held responsible for the work of the counsellor, a supervisor is positioned in surveillance of client work, and so their attention in supervision is directed to what has been and might be *done*, rather than to how the counsellor theorises their practice. An effect of this positioning of supervisor and counsellor in relation is evident in the counsellor's purposeful selection of material in and out of the supervision agenda on the basis of that which supervisor authority legitimises. In this way fears that a counsellor may not bring that which would be most useful to supervision may well be realised, not because counsellors are reluctant or do not know, but because the discourse of supervisor responsibility produces a supervision that polices and limits what may be brought.

Noticing paternalistic relations: questioning where expertise lies

Kate, too, had come to protest some effects of an instrumentally-focussed supervision regime that positioned the supervisor as omniscient. Kate first spoke of her concerns in Research Meeting One when Liz was reflecting on her (Liz's) subsequent reading of a transcript of a session where her work as a supervisor had been interpreted as what I call instrumental action. Liz noted that the supervision had been interpreted as:

> the supervisor offering suggestions - ...that's what I read the script as saying , [that I was making] suggestions of questions [for the counsellor to ask her client]. And what it [the practice of that interpretation]invites is a consideration [by the counsellor] about whether "I've tried that" or "I've not tried that". Like an evaluation [of the work of the counsellor].

As Liz went on to explore the interactions thus produced, Kate interrupted,

> Because you can't ever know the client's story in a supervisory role because there has been so much said that you could never be party to.

In contrast with the counsellor position of which Kate had spoken earlier, where the counsellor relies on the supervisor to *put her right*, a counsellor is positioned by this comment as having knowledge to which the supervisor is not party. The supervisor cannot be omniscient about the counsellor's client. *Being put right* is a less comfortable position now for the counsellor. There is now a tension about knowledge claims. On the one hand a supervisor is positioned as omniscient in respect of practice - *she'll put me right* - and on the other hand they are positioned as having an understanding inferior to the counsellor's in respect of this particular client work.

Despite Kate's interruption, Liz continued her reflection on the understandings she had from her review of the earlier session, where a *have-you-tried* discursive practice had been played out. Liz went on to speak of how what I am calling an instrumental approach to supervision, arising out of supervisor omniscience, works to locate deficit.

> There's something wrong with the client or there's something wrong with the counsellor. And I was looking back at that and thinking, "That's what happened". The questions [I was asking] set up a process of evaluating, rather than [exploring] the issue [that I was offering to think about]. I think that is also the value of having a transcript. I went away thinking, "How did these things happen?" But I was able to look back at the transcript and have some more ideas about that.

Continuing the conversation, Kate persisted with her interest in another effect of supervisor omniscience that she had experienced.

> One of the clarifications I've had [in this project] which I am really valuing links to what you're talking about. A lot of my previous experience being supervised was about discussing the client and there's been a sense of

> frustration in me as the supervised person because I might have worked with this client for eight hours and so there was no way my supervisor could appreciate the fullness of what I knew because I couldn't tell my supervisor in that time.

Like Kate, Liz was noticing the position a counsellor is called into in a supervision discourse that positions the supervisor as expert on the counsellor, her work, and her clients. Within those discourse practices Kate experienced her knowledge of her client being marginalised. Hawkins and Shohet (1989, p.23) called the phenomenon of contestation for the knowing position in supervision, for knowing who can manage the client better, "sibling rivalry". But I suggest that counsellor and supervisor are not constructed as siblings by the discursive production of supervision as instruction. For, in the grammar of Kate's speaking, the counsellor remains the object of the supervisor's action. The counsellor is represented as *the supervised person*, *being supervised*, hierarchically positioned with little room to contest or to know within the power relation of supervision as instructional method, even as she resisted having her particular knowledge disregarded.

Liz's and Kate's contributions have suggested that an emphasis on supervisor knowledge in instrumental practice risks positioning counsellors or clients in deficit, and risks positioning counsellors and supervisors in competition for who knows more, particularly when the supervision conversation focuses on clients. Although on the occasion of Research Meeting One, quoted above, Kate next went on to speak of the changed focus in the supervision we were producing in the project, a few weeks later she again spoke of this problematic positioning of counsellor and supervisor. This second speaking was on the occasion of Supervision 11, during the Phase Four team reflection on the processes of the supervision that had just taken place. Kate was a team member in Supervision 11. She again expressed her frustration with her past experiences of the positioning offered the counsellor when the supervisor is positioned as expert and when the work of supervision focuses on the client, rather than on the counsellor in relationship with the client in the counselling work.

> Some of my experience had been that supervision was about trying to uncover the dynamics of my client, and I'd found that enormously frustrating because there was no way in a supervision session I could explain the fullness of what I knew about the dynamics of my client to my supervisor. So I have experienced hearing a lot of information about my clients that irritated me because it felt as if there was an accusation there that I wasn't, oh well, I mean, this was just irritating.

Again, Kate appears to have experienced herself in the position of which she spoke earlier, as *the supervised person*. *Supervised*, she struggles to find a speaking position for herself as the supervisor works to produce some truth about Kate's client of which Kate was unaware: the location of this truth about the client dynamics will solve the problem Kate has brought to supervision. *Supervised*, she experiences herself being *accused*. Being *put right* no longer has the attraction of reassurance it had earlier, because it does not offer voice to what the counsellor knows. Rivalry for the better understanding of the client is evident in Kate's speaking, but the power relation of supervision produces an uneven rivalry. Rather than providing safety and *back-up*, the supervisor's positioning as omniscient is now producing frustration and irritation in the counsellor and is now reproduced as accusation of the counsellor for not having done right. The effect is the diminishment of the counsellor's knowledge. Kate was protesting both that diminishment and the evaluation practices that Liz had also identified.

Some effects of a discourse of supervisor responsibility

How are these data to be understood? Developmental models might construct the difficulty that Kate was protesting in terms of the need for an appropriate assessment of supervisee stage. Such an assessment, according to a developmental account, would offer a supervisor a more appropriate supervisory intervention now that the supervisee is no longer new to the field. The counsellor might be understood no longer to need the level of instruction they previously did. According to this construction, knowing continues to reside with the supervisor: it is they who make the assessment of counsellor stage of development, and then modify their intervention.

Extract 7.1. Reproducing instrumental practice

Zoe is counsellor, and Leah is supervisor in Supervision 5. Sharon is a team member. This excerpt is from Phase One.

Zoe's introduction:

> There's a client I'm working with at present it would be really good to talk about. I've met with her five or six times. [...] She came initially with issues around ...
>
> So that was the first session. The next session when she came the main issue was a relationship she had had for eight years which finished about a year ago.
>
> Now the third session when she came she introduced a third issue which was

...

Leah's question:

> What are the effects of ending a relationship? What are the effects still carrying on from the relationship? How much time does it occupy in your life?

Leah's next question:

> Does she [the client] know any other people who have ended a relationship?

Zoe's reply:

> I don't know. I haven't asked her that.

Leah's later question:

> What effects might there have been for them of ending a relationship? I mean, I heard of one woman who said she couldn't read a book for two years afterwards.

Zoe's reply:

> Yes, that's interesting, that line of inquiry. I haven't tried that...

However, rather than accepting this developmental construction, I argue that the problem is located in the paternalistic discursive practices of instrumental approaches to supervision produced within a discourse of supervisor responsibility. To support my argument, I now turn to an instance of practice to suggest that counsellors are "trained" within the discursive regime of instrumental approaches to supervision to report facts and to be answerable to retrospective questions of "Have you done...?" and "Have you tried...?" They are positioned to *report in* as supervisors are positioned to *check up*. Prospectively, supervision is also concerned with the instrumental, with the knowing supervisor instructing the counsellor about appropriate action to take, according to the account that becomes visible in this following example from practice.

Extract 7.1. Reproducing instrumental practice

Zoe is counsellor, and Leah is supervisor in Supervision 5. Sharon is a team member. Excerpts are from Phase One and Phase Four.

As the supervision session began Zoe presented her agenda for the supervision in the form of a report. She reported on what the client brought to counselling initially and what she had brought to each session.

> There's a client I'm working with at present it would be really good to talk about. I've met with her five or six times. [...] She came initially with issues around ...
>
> So that was the first session. The next session when she came the main issue was a relationship she had had for eight years which finished about a year ago.
>
> Now the third session when she came she introduced a third issue which was

I notice, firstly, that Zoe did not say why as a counsellor she would like to talk about this work in particular. Secondly, the report did not include Zoe or her concerns: it focused on the client not the counselling, on what Lowe and Guy call "the drama of the case" (1996, p.31). Perhaps the report form is the production of a counsellor

positioned within the *they will put me right* discourse. Perhaps a retrospective fact-oriented report is a supervision practice that has been produced by a discourse of supervisor responsibility: the counsellor is to *report in*. After all, to exercise responsibility the supervisor needs to receive some sort of report. But what is the report to be about? In the discourse within which Zoe was producing her supervision agenda, it appeared that the report was to be about the client.

Leah clarified with Zoe what it was that her client was hoping for in the counselling. Leah's inquiry, too, was oriented towards the client. As the conversation continued, Leah went on to ask some questions.

> What are the effects of ending a relationship? What are the effects still carrying on from the relationship? How much time does it occupy in your life?

These questions might be construed on the terms Kate had used, quoted earlier in the chapter: *uncovering the dynamics of the client*. Or they might be construed as being produced by deconstructing inquiry, inquiry that asks about the client's positioning within discourse. I want to suggest that the discursive positioning Leah as supervisor took up in this inquiry can be understood as informed by constructionism. The position she took up in this inquiry is what I have come to call the commentary position. It is a concept I will return to a number of times in the ensuing chapters, as it is a particular position that a discursive supervision practice makes available. It is a position that flattens hierarchy between counsellor and supervisor, and positions them alongside each other in positions of mutual and collaborative investigation of the discursive vista before them both. If the counsellor accepts the position call offered by the supervisor from the commentary position, together, counsellor and supervisor deconstruct particular cultural stories. Deconstructing, they ask about positions and effects, drawing on their shared knowledge. The assumption that underlies this position is that knowledge, for counselling, will be mutually and collaboratively generated in decentred inquiry.

Leah might then be understood to have been asking questions in the manner of the commentary position, and so within a discourse of supervision as discursive inquiry, as went on to ask Zoe:

> Does she [the client] know any other people who have ended a relationship?

Zoe replied:

> I don't know. I haven't asked her that.

Zoe's reply saw her speaking from a position offered by instrumental supervision practice. In a discursive supervision regime, Leah's earlier question, *What are the effects of ending a relationship*, carried with it, in its subtext, another question. That other question was something like: "Are these symptoms and experiences that are being understood by your client as individual pathology perhaps common experiences and would she know this?" It thus asked the question that permeates discursive work, *what cultural knowledge might be useful here*? However, without any clarification of what the *counselling* problem was, the focus of the supervision was still with the client, and Zoe understood Leah's inquiry not as collaborative but in the genre of the *reporting in*/being directed relational positions of instrumental discourse. Zoe was called into a position familiar to her in the discursive practices of an instrumental supervision: she was to *report in*. With Zoe called into a reporting in position, Leah's inquiry was reproduced as a suggestion of appropriate action that Zoe might have taken. Supervision as instructional method could be positioning Leah, in Kate's words, as working from her position of omniscience as supervisor, to *uncover the dynamics* of Zoe's client (of which Zoe was unaware), or as taking a position of *accusation* of Zoe about the actions taken, or not, in her practice.

The question, *Does she [the client] know any other people who have ended a relationship*, unintentionally invoked a supervision-as-instrumental-method discourse. It thus worked to position Zoe as accounting to Leah for the specifics of what she had or had not done in the counselling: *I don't know. I haven't asked her that*. The

effect of the inquiry was to bring forward Zoe's not knowing. And she did not know because she had not asked the client for the facts.

Inquiry, in an instrumental regime, thus produces the counsellor as not knowing, and as not having done what she might have been expected to have done. When the supervisor is positioned as all-knowing expert, Zoe's reply is the kind of reply that makes sense on the terms that supervision discourse produces: *This is the action you should have taken: have you taken it?* The counsellor's options are directed towards reporting actions taken or not taken. What they know or do not know depends upon fact, upon instrumental actions taken or not taken. In a supervision regime focussed on the facts of particular client work, inquiry about ideas, or cultural stories or practices, or theory does not make sense: this was the point that Liz had made earlier in describing a former supervision relationship where it was simpler to *bring a client* than to talk theory.

However, in this instance of practice, Leah did not yet understand the interdiscursive misunderstanding that was at work, between practices of collaborative inquiry and practices of hierarchical inquiry. Leah followed with another question that asked about the cultural stories of separation discourse. Again her question employed the kind of decentred, deconstructing inquiry that I will consider in subsequent chapters.

> What effects might there have been for them of ending a relationship? I mean, I heard of one woman who said she couldn't read a book for two years afterwards.

Leah's inquiry was an indirect invitation to Zoe to pause and think about practice on more general terms [in the commentary position]. However, the indirectness and unfamiliarity of the inquiry meant the terms it offered were not directly visible to Zoe. She was again left positioned to hear and respond from a position within a more familiar discourse of instrumentality in relation with an omniscient supervisor.

> Yes, that's interesting, that line of inquiry. I haven't tried that…

Positioned within a more familiar discourse of instrumentality in relation with an omniscient supervisor, Zoe responded as though her task was now to *try* the intervention the supervisor had suggested. She was to try a new line of inquiry *because* that is what the supervisor had suggested. In this discursive regime, the location of knowledge is unquestioned and the supervisor is centred in the supervision.

Rather than a collaborative inquiry into cultural knowledge that might support Zoe in making meaning of the problem of her client seeming *not to be moving*, Leah's question was produced as instruction.

The interpretation I offer of this conversation is further supported by Zoe's comment during the Phase Four reflecting team conversation, when the team were reflecting together on the process of this particular supervision. Commenting on the questions Leah had asked (and there had been a number of subsequent similar interactions), Zoe suggested that

> They were questions about what possible techniques I could have used, but they weren't questions about process, though, were they?

Zoe had heard the questions as questions of instrumental practice, as suggestions of *techniques*, clearly noticing that she had felt positioned as a beneficiary of suggestions for practice produced by supervisor expertness. Within instrumental discursive practice, the conversational space had been shaped to produce questions about *technique*, about how a counsellor should go on in the counselling. Counsellor understanding is not evident in this version of supervision discourse, with its emphasis on supervisor knowledge of appropriate technique/action for the counsellor to reproduce in the counselling and with its reproduction of a relationship of paternalism and instrumentality. Agency or an agentive position is not available to the counsellor. Such a situation may produce the frustration and irritation of which I have already shown Kate speaking, if counsellors do not wish to take up, without protesting, the positions thus made available to them. Perhaps in Zoe's comment,

They were questions about what possible techniques I could have used, but they weren't questions about process, though, were they, there is some protest at the position in which she found herself.

As the Phase Four team reflection continued, Sharon drew attention to the focus of Leah's questioning. That focus was the client's positioning in the discourse of separation. Sharon contrasted that focus with her own interest in the counsellor's positioning in the work of the counselling. Leah responded, noticing the positionings that had been produced.

> Yeah, and I was thinking, too, that asking questions about the client invites, like a checklist, or almost defensiveness.

In response to Leah's comments on these effects of the focus of the inquiry, Zoe offered her reflection on the conversational exchange in the Phase One supervision. She, too, had noticed discomfort in the position to which she had been called.

> Well, one of the things I realised I was saying was "I have done that", "I have done that". And then I thought, "Am I sounding petulant here?" I was just aware of that, that discomfort. And then it makes me connect it back to wanting to tell the full story, so that the supervisor understands everything that's happened beforehand.

I think that there are two protests here about the positions Zoe found herself in within a paternalistic supervision relation – although Leah's questions can be read as offering a different relation. Firstly, Zoe was suggesting that a counsellor who is positioned to take instrumental action according to supervisor prescription might also have some knowledge and they might already have taken the action prescribed. The counsellor might not need *putting right*, for they might already be right, as Zoe suggested she was claiming: *I have done that; I have done that*, she reported herself as having said. Further, according to Zoe's account, no longer was the supervisor all-knowing: before instructing the counsellor in appropriate action to take in counselling, the supervisor needed to know *the full story*. The full story,

according to Zoe's account, is a story that is located within the counsellor's knowledge, not the supervisor's. And the full story, according to this account, is a story based on facts. While I would not argue that a "full story" can be known by a counsellor or a supervisor (or by any of us), I understand Zoe to have been pointing out that a supervisor may be making judgements and giving advice on the basis of very limited information, having less information about the client and the counselling than the counsellor. Zoe, as I understand it, was protesting an apparent disregard for her closer and more thorough knowledge of a particular client produced by a discourse of supervisor responsibility and omniscience.

Familiar with a position in a supervision regime in which there was little space where counsellor and supervisor might come to value, or perhaps even be interested in, the knowledge a counsellor might bring, Zoe did not identify Leah's position of interest in Zoe's knowledge of the cultural stories of separation. Familiar with the calls of a supervision discourse that promoted instrumental action, Zoe was poorly positioned to shake off the hailing to a paternalistic conversation that invites a consideration by the counsellor about whether *I've tried that* or *I've not tried that*. The emphasis produced by the power relation of paternalism had been on techniques the counsellor could have or should have tried, and for which she was accountable. Zoe had been well trained to think in the terms, the "hearable meanings" (Harré and Davies, 1991, p.58), that this discourse had offered her. Both Zoe's participation in the supervision and her comments on it afterwards were produced on the terms of a discourse of supervision as instrumental action and supervisor omniscience. However, she was at the same time working to reposition herself within it. Recognising how it required her to assemble herself on its terms she was looking to negotiate alternatives. However, in the interdiscursive moments of the supervision conversation and the Phase Four reflection, the call to a collaborative position was not accessible to her.

This instance of practice has been used here to illustrate the effects for a counsellor positioned as not-knowing within a dominant supervision discourse that privileges instrumental action and supervisor knowledge. Despite the counsellor's discomfort, the familiarity of being called to account (by offering a

report and in responding to expert inquiry) closed off options for the counsellor to take a position other than that offered by a relation of paternalism produced by a discourse of supervisor authority and responsibility.

Producing supervision within moral orders

Davies and Harré suggested that " the relative nature of positions not only to each other but to moral orders can make the perception of one [person] almost impossible for the other [person], in the relational position, to grasp" (1991, p.58). If I take particular supervision discourses to be produced out of particular moral orders, the struggle for meaning in which Leah and Zoe, as supervisor and counsellor, found themselves can be understood as an effect of their positions in particular moral orders. A moral order wherein "the machinery of therapy" (Amundson, Webber, & Stewart, 2000, p.21) is the central concern of supervision offers different terms than a moral order that produces a supervision concerned with collaboratively generating some understanding of the discursive conditions of clients' lives. Zoe had access to a storyline by which she could make sense of Leah's inquiry, and that storyline was produced by supervision discourse constructed in terms of instrumental practice. A position to work for understanding of the discursive conditions of a client's life was not accessible to Zoe, as that storyline offered no narrative coherence. Leah, on the other hand, did not understand immediately, during the Phase One conversation, the inaccessibility to Zoe of the position she was intending to make available in her speaking. Later, in Phase Four, however, she noticed how her focus on *client* positioning had invoked *defensiveness*, rather than collaboration. Leah's observation returns me to what I am arguing is a central concern of supervision: supervision must work to position counsellors **well** for the exercise of responsibility for ethical and effective counselling practice.

This example of practice has illustrated how when supervision is produced as instrumental practice a counsellor was positioned poorly for she was called to *defend* and to acknowledge what she did not know. Through this chapter data from comments and commentaries and from a supervision conversation have been used to demonstrate some of the effects for counsellors of being distanced to the margins when a discourse of supervisor responsibility produces supervision as

instrumental action on the part of an omniscient supervisor. All participants offered commentary that demonstrated the construction of supervision as examination and confession. Kate and Liz, in particular, spoke about being positioned as beginning counsellors, grateful for the reassurance and guidance supervision offered, but finding this positioning double-edged for they also found themselves positioned without authority.

At the end of the reflecting team project, reflecting on the ways in which supervision had been produced differently in our work, Kate suggested that she would be *much more demanding in future* in setting up a supervision relationship. I read Kate's use of the word *demanding* as suggesting that she would claim for herself as a counsellor speaking rights in the construction of a supervision relationship. She was, I suggest, refusing the call of the discourse of supervisor responsibility to a pre-existing position for the counsellor of passive, accepting, supervis*ed* supervis*ee,* subject. Rather, she was speaking of a much more active, engaged-in-asking, putting-forward-expectations, subjective position in a different supervision discourse. I note, however, that to have voice, to have and to put forward expectations, to exercise agency in making up supervision, positions the counsellor as *demanding*, a somewhat pejorative positioning. To demand is to take strong action to insert oneself into a position in dialogical space. Perhaps the sense is that collaborative relationships are not likely to be offered since they fall so far outside paternalistic relation offered by the discourse of supervisor responsibility. Is the effect of the dominance of the discourse of supervisor responsibility that a counsellor will be positioned as having to *demand* the conditions they seek, to ask strongly for what they would like, if supervision is to be otherwise than supervisor-constructed, otherwise than paternalistic? Or perhaps *having to demand* is another face of paternalism: if a counsellor entering supervision as a dialogic space in which they claim some interests may be constructed as *demanding*, paternalism continues to be dominant. On the basis that dominant gender discourse has taught women to be accepting, I might speculate, too, about gender discourse constructing Kate as *demanding* when she is other than accepting of what she is given. Perhaps Kate's experience reflects Granello, Beamish, and Davis'(1997) findings that increases in supervisory collegiality over the length of a supervisory relationship was more likely for male

counsellors than for women. As a woman counsellor would Kate have to work harder, *demand* even, to achieve increased collegiality? Each of these readings suggests that to be *much more demanding* is to take up a position that resists and subverts the paternal relations of *the supervisor will put me right* discourse. It is to make a claim as counsellor that *I also know what I am doing*. And it is thus to challenge the dominant discourse of supervision, and so to change that discourse.

That was the task we had undertaken, to investigate the effects on dominant discourse of supervision through engagement in supervision on the basis of the politics and ethics produced by the narrative metaphor. However, as Extract 7.1 has shown, changing the terms of the discourse is not an easy call. We did not meet with unqualified success in our efforts. For as Liz noted in another conversation, *structures within our culture* get reproduced in supervision in unilaterally hierarchical processes. Liz made this comment, noting that supervisors aren't the originators of the idea that responsibility resides in a supervisor. To look to experts as the source of knowledge is a product of the knowledge:power matrix to which Foucault drew attention: it is a practice that permeates our culture. Dominant supervision discourse assembles supervisors as experts. Supervisors' knowledge status positions them as experts in the power relation of supervision. As part of her example of how supervision is caught up in reproducing *structures within our culture*, Liz went on to note that some employing agencies require the provision of a supervision report. This requirement may be taken up by the supervisor as an invitation to provide unilateral evaluation of the counsellor's counselling work, based on the supervisor's experiences of the counsellor in supervision, or maybe on the basis of tapes they have heard. The responsibility to report to others outside the supervision relationship is constructed as belonging only to the supervisor, a strategy that comes out of the construction of supervision as surveillance and examination. In this way supervision becomes a *They'll put you right*, discursive practice. Here it is the employer who is to be reassured that counsellor practice is effective and ethical, and the supervisor is charged with the responsibility of attesting to that, on the basis of their expert status. In the evaluation practices offered by this construction of supervisor responsibility, the supervisor is centred and supervisor knowledge is centred. In Liz's words, *structures within our*

culture produce supervision in these ways as they reproduce hierarchical relations where one person with expert status examines and completes a report about another.

The matter of supervisor responsibility is a complex one. The work both counsellors and supervisors do is responsible work. However, there are many possible ways in which that responsibility might be expressed in supervision. The possibilities for producing supervision differently, and exercising responsibility relationally will be taken up in subsequent chapters. Data presented in this chapter suggest that the centring of responsibility in the person of the supervisor does not position counsellors well for the production of ethical practice.

The work of this chapter

Through the course of this chapter I have shown how a discourse of supervisor responsibility might offer to induct counsellors into positions of safety and reassurance if they accept its terms. On the terms of this discourse, within relations of paternalism between supervisor and counsellor protection is offered to clients and counsellors, employing authorities and professional authorities. What the protection is from is not altogether clear: perhaps malpractice? Protection is offered through the provision of oversight and direction by an expert. Thus, counsellors are *reporting in* to supervisors and supervisors are *checking up* that things are right. Expertise and knowledge are centred in the person of the supervisor. These locations have effects on how supervision gets produced, enabling some forms of action and restraining others, enabling some forms of relation between counsellor and clients and restraining others, enabling some forms of thinking about counselling practice and restraining others. Disciplinary power is exerted through confession and examination. The discipline of counselling reproduces itself. The version of unilateral supervisor responsibility reproduced in the discursive practices discussed in this chapter is one that constructs an instrumental relation between supervisor and counsellor and between supervisor and client. The emphasis is on an indicative, fact-relating mode (Parry & Doan, 1994), on instruction about what to do in practice rather than theorising practice.

Discourses position us. The data presented in this chapter suggest that a discourse of supervisor responsibility may not position supervisors and counsellors well to collaborate in the tasks of supervision; nor may it position counsellors well to exercise responsibility for effective and ethical practice in their counselling work. Its discourse practices tend to obscure the professional abilities of counsellors.

Chapter Eight

Producing constructionist supervision practice: Dialogical practices

Introduction

Chapter Eight focuses this account on aspects of constructionist supervision practice. It demonstrates the supervision relationship being produced as a dialogic one: examples illustrate the co-production of knowledge in dialogic inquiry. Collaborative deconstructing inquiry and research-of-practice inquiry are demonstrated as supervision strategies, through examples of practice. Extracts from practice illustrate use of the commentary position in dialogic practice. The extracts from practice also exemplify a particular version of reflective practice produced when counsellor and supervisor take a metadiscursive orientation. In metadiscursive positions they notice the practices by which they are constituted in their practice and the moral orders within which those practices position them. I draw attention to the implications of a metadiscursive orientation for the management of professional responsibility, power relations and the ethics of practice.

In focusing on discursive practices produced in a constructionist orientation in supervision, I show our group producing supervision differently than it was described and produced in the previous chapter. In offering these accounts (of difference) I do not take a stance of ongoing direct comparison with what has come before. That stance has the attendant risks that I position myself as a self-appointed scrutineer of 'right' and 'wrong' practice and that the account I offer is limited to binary and opposing descriptions. I wish to produce supervision differently, but not 'in correction' of others but in an extension into supervision of the tenets of narrative therapy. At the same time, I recognise that as I write of constructionist supervision practices, accounts of usual and familiar practices will be invoked, for as Foucault suggested,

> There can be no statement that in one way or another does not reactualize others. (1972, p.98)

In the inevitable reactualising of other versions of supervision as I describe this one, I recognise this is one account of supervision, to be placed alongside others. My intention is to examine the practices we developed, through locating our practices in constructionist ideas, that made it possible for supervision to be "inhabited" differently rather than "attacked" (Larner, 1999, p.50). To inhabit differently, rather than to attack or correct, is my purpose.

In this chapter I follow a similar style of presentation to Chapter Seven, presenting participant comments and commentaries as data from transcript-texts derived from three research sites: the Research Meetings, the Reviews and the Phase Four conversations. I illustrate those comments and commentaries and develop them further on the basis of the transcript-texts derived from the supervision work. I purposefully draw on examples in the transcript-texts of two-person counsellor and supervisor conversations, in Phases One and Three of the reflecting team process. I take this emphasis here and in the next chapter in order to demonstrate aspects of dyadic supervision at work: that is the most familiar supervision practice for counsellors in New Zealand.

Evolving ideas

> It is not our ideas we should cherish, but their evolution. (Weingarten,1992, p.27)

One of the strengths of this project was that spaces were created for the evolution and ongoing development of supervision practice. We drew on many resources in this evolution. The possibilities that we came to produce over the course of the project depended upon the discourse practices of both supervision and narrative therapy. We drew on our knowledges of supervision; and we drew on our knowledges about narrative therapy and the post structuralist and social constructionist ideas which have produced that therapy. Other accounts, constructed in professional, cultural, familial and personal experiences, also informed our navigating. In a rapidly changing professional climate, the accounts

on which we called were not static: the already available accounts with which we were engaging and on which we drew were being produced and produced anew as we used them. While we were negotiating what made up and might make up the spaces between *narrative therapy* and *supervision* and how those spaces themselves might be produced, we were also negotiating what it was that *narrative therapy* and *supervision* were made up of and how they might be produced.

Noticing the changing maps and accounts, and the changing courses we were navigating, Liz commented that her "preferred way of working, because of interaction with other people, ... will keep developing and changing. It won't be a stagnant thing". The work of the participants reflects such developing and changing over the course of the project. When I spoke of "styles" in speaking of different approaches we were employing, Liz asked,

> Is this different styles, or is this just *developing* styles? It's not fixed the way we do things. The way I may do something one day is not fixed and it's not particularly *my style*, because I will go away and think about it, and I'll experiment and I'll talk about the ideas in other settings, too.

Anne offered back to Liz a suggestion that she was valuing "the evolution of ideas" in her work in the project, echoing Weingarten's appreciation of fluidity of ideas making possible other ideas and other modes of practising. Writing some time after the conversations on which this document draws, I note that practice has changed and developed for all of us who participated, each of us navigating new and different waters. To make that possible was one of the purposes of the project, although it was not one that was researched.

> For me, more than anything this group is a chance to experiment, and to think, I can just have a go. ... And I might look back and cringe and think, 'Oh, why didn't I notice that, why didn't I answer that?' It's like not having to be right, but just being able at times to experiment, and to think that we can all have a say in this, to say 'Was that useful?' and 'What might I do differently?'

Liz spoke of her positioning in the project in this way in Research Meeting One. She was suggesting that our purpose in the research was not the production of a model, finished, seminal version of narrative supervision, but that we were authorising ourselves and each other to employ provisional tactics as we found our way about in response to the project's purpose. These tactics would then be available for investigation and reflection in the group in order to generate practice that might be *useful.* We wanted to produce supervision in particular ways – a local version for local conditions, and a version that drew on the philosophical positions that had produced narrative approaches in therapy. There was little literature or 'training' available to us: we were engaged in experimental action. As we experimented, the "high ideals" of narrative therapy (Morss & Nichterlein, 1999) did not insure us against difficulties, difficulties of the kind that, as Liz put it, might lead to us wishing we had done otherwise or better when we looked back through the lenses of responsible professional review or of self-judgement. There were also the difficulties of making sense together of the different ideas produced by different epistemological positions, particularly with the risk of invoking comparisons and judgements of rightness and wrongness. Inhabiting supervision differently was an ongoing challenge as we worked to produce supervision that was, to use Liz's description, *useful.*

A dialogic supervisory relation

The positioning of the counsellor and supervisor in relation was one of the first analytic frames I offered the data. In Chapter Three I drew attention to the centrality of the supervision relationship in a number of accounts of supervision, (Anderson & Swim; 1995; Holloway; 1995; Kaiser, 1997, for example) and at the same time the marginalising of the counsellor, in many accounts, from the construction and production of supervision. I was interested, then, to explore the versions of relationship that the transcript-texts made visible. As they offered alternative accounts, participants often drew on constructions of the supervision relationship that diminished hierarchy. There was evidence of a number of tactics and strategies being employed to pay attention to the politics of the construction of the supervision relationship. I suggest that in working for a supervision that sits alongside a therapy that is constructed as collaborative we were also

positioned to construct the supervision relation as collaborative. A collaborative relation between counsellor and supervisor was spoken about and demonstrated in a number of ways.

For example, Clare spoke of her work in supervision as *a walking alongside* that offered counsellors an opportunity to explore their work and their experience of their work. There is a disruption of hierarchy in the *walking alongside* position. According to this construction, counsellors are centred, in relation with their work, in the production of supervision, for the supervisor is *alongside*. Anne spoke of the pleasure of having *someone else who cares about your work*. A metaphor of care constructs a different relation between supervisor and counsellor than a metaphor of paternalistic responsibility. The supervisor is someone *else* who cares: the counsellor holds the more centred position of first-carer for their own work. There is a subtle shift in the location of responsibility in this speaking. There is also a subtle shift in the naming of the work that is being done in supervision. Metaphors of care, and of walking alongside, contrast with those of reporting in and putting right that dominated the previous chapter.

Situating supervisor authority

Participants described other practices disruptive of hierarchy that evoked a dialogic supervisory relationship. Anne described a practice of situating her authority as supervisor, at any time and particularly when called to take a position of evaluation. The practice of situating her authority worked to disrupt hierarchy and produce collaboration. Anne offered this description during Research Meeting Three when she raised the matter of managing evaluation in supervising a student. She went on:

> The student I was supervising ... she wanted feed back from my position as supervisor and she wanted me to tell her what I was thinking [about her work as a counsellor]. And - I mean that's how I like to work, to be able to say, "I'm asking this question, I'm wondering about *this*, because of *this* ", or to say, "Because if I was doing that I would have been really wanting to know this because of these reasons". What I wanted her to do [when she wanted feedback] was interview me about my comments, so that they

would be put in a context, or they could be seen as located with me and my thinking, rather than as some factual teaching thing that couldn't be contested, or couldn't have had a different meaning applied to them as well. Yeah, that was what I was uncomfortable with, as if I would come up with something right or better; [rather than] that I might just come up with some other possibilities, or have some other ideas about it, what could have happened.

Anne paid attention to the power relations of the supervision relationship by taking care that her speaking from the position of supervisor was available to be "dialogized". She wanted the positions from which she spoke to be visible in her speaking, and her words open to negotiation, their meanings investigated. Her speaking as a supervisor should be put *in context*. Her speaking was one version of how things were, and a version about which the counsellor could interview her. This supervision practice is thus already constructed as deconstructing: it addresses matters of power and justice at a very particular practice level (Larner, 1999a, p.41) by paying attention to the power relations at work in the supervision relation.

According to Anne's account the supervisor's authority is constructed as de-centred: her thinking is offered and its genesis made transparent. The ideas the supervisor offers are available for negotiating and evaluating. At the centre of the supervision is the dialogic space within which the counsellor makes meaning with the supervisor of the comments the supervisor has made: meaningfulness is seen to be produced in dialogue. The effect of this practice is to disrupt developmental assumptions that would otherwise privilege a supervisor's assessment, the authority of which would be legitimised by the supervisor's positioning in sole responsibility in a discourse of supervisor responsibility. In the disruption of hierarchy the supervisor's comments were offered as *located with me and my thinking*. Responsibility is performed differently when discursive practices call the counsellor into a position from which they might join in negotiating the legitimacy of a supervisor's feedback. Space is made for dialogue, for the shared production of meaning and authority.

Chapter Ten offers examples, from the supervision conversations, of this practice of situating one's speaking. My focus at this point is on *comments* that participants made about their stance and their thinking as they worked to produce collaborative and dialogic supervision practice.

Ongoing negotiation of the supervision process

Liz described employing similar practices of unsettling hierarchical assumptions in inviting counsellors into collaborative relation through engaging counsellors in ongoing negotiation of the supervision process. She said that she began from the premise that the supervision relation was not already finally constructed, but was available for construction: and she paid attention to how it was being constructed. She consulted with the counsellor, asking them, *Is this [conversation] being helpful? Is this working for you? Are these the things you are wanting to talk about?* Such consultation is familiar practice in narrative therapy. In supervision this kind of inquiry positions the counsellor as knowing something of both what they want and what they want to ask for in supervision. Further, they are positioned as knowing whether or not the current supervision practices are producing a supervision that meets their interests and intentions. It posits supervision as negotiable: to be made up in reference to both the professionally available versions of it and the possibilities that the particular supervision relationship might produce. The counsellor is invited into a speaking position in the ongoing production of supervision. The construction of supervision is bilateral rather than unilateral.

Taking and offering positions in dialogic relation

In analysing transcript-texts for how supervision agendas were presented and negotiated, I paid attention to the ways in which counsellors, too, contributed to the production of dialogical space in supervision. Anne, as counsellor, introduced her supervision agenda in Supervision 14 in this way, inviting the supervisor (and the reflecting team) into a *thinking with* position.

> I'm wanting to get some ideas and directions, possibilities, for moving on with this client. It's not because we're stuck; it's because he's made some fairly important changes in his life and, yeah, I'm just wanting to engage you

Extract 8.1: Interrogating decision-making discourse: The commentary position

Lee is counsellor and Ruth is supervisor, in Supervision 18.

Ruth I'm just thinking, if you're not used to making decisions, how would you know how to make decisions? Or if you don't have a sense of control over your own life, how would you recognise a decision that happened? Or, decision-making sort of fits in with goal-setting and planning, and that does seem to have a really male philosophy behind it, or a particular world view, behind it.

Lee So that the words we use are quite important.

Ruth Well, I don't know...

Lee Well, the meaning of them, what's the meaning given to "goal setting" and "planning", "decision-making"?

Ruth Yes, it's quite an agentive thing to do to think of yourself as a decision-maker.

Lee And in terms of, particularly couples, thinking about the couple relationship, and how does the couple relationship make decisions, or how, what style of decision-making does this couple have?

Ruth Yeah, and where did it come from? Where did the blue print for that [style of] decision-making come from? (Yeah) Who does it work best for? Who doesn't it work best for? Who reads the blue print well, and who is confused by how that blue print works? There's never been much written about it, and I haven't really thought about it before.

and the rest of the group in ***thinking with*** me about how can I make the most of these.

The *thinking with* position highlights a location in the text similar to that highlighted by the *alongside* position that Clare spoke of. Attention is paid to the kind of relationship that produces the work of the supervision, and the metaphors used are ones that diminish hierarchy by producing partners in collaboration: *thinking with* and *alongside*. Anne as counsellor sought collaboration in generating possibilities for practice. According to this account, the supervisor (and the reflecting team) were available to serve the counsellor's interests for the supervision, and were to be guided by her in how they would work. The counsellor became the consultant to the supervisor not only about the supervision agenda, but also about the terms on which the agenda might be met.

The following extract illustrates an instance of practice where supervisor and counsellor were positioned to *think with* each other. In those positions they collaborated in deconstructive inquiry. The centre of their inquiry thus produced new possibilities for practice.

Working in dialogic relation and co-producing knowledge

Extract 8.1: Interrogating decision-making discourse: the commentary position

Lee is counsellor and Ruth is supervisor, in Supervision 18.

Lee introduced her supervision interest as having arisen from her work with a couple who were making a decision about whether or not one partner would use anti-depressants. Lee's interest was in how choices and decisions get made; she was picking up on the particular and asking how she could be more helpful, generally, to clients, particularly couples, in their decision making. Lee's interest was in interrogating the discourses of decision making in the light of a particular instance of practice and her reflections upon that instance. What does it mean to make decisions, she was asking. The purpose of the interrogation was the generation of new possibilities to serve Lee in her counselling practice.

I pick up the supervision conversation at a point where it appears that the conversation, rather than a *walking alongside*, was almost a running alongside as together Lee and Ruth interrogated decision-making as discursive practice. The extract opens with Ruth speaking as co-researching supervisor in this interrogation of supervision discourse:

> I'm just thinking, if you're not used to making decisions, how would you know how to make decisions? Or if you don't have a sense of control over your own life, how would you recognise a decision that happened? Or, decision-making sort of fits in with goal-setting and planning, and that does seem to have a really male philosophy behind it, or a particular world view, behind it.

Ruth's questions, not of Lee, but of the making up of discourse, asked about positioning in decision making, the kind of subject called forth by the discourse of decision making, and the assumptions that produce a decision-making discourse. The *you* to whom Ruth referred was a generic *you*. She was making her inquiry from the commentary position, one where she used her supervisory authority in a deconstructing commentary and inquiry about the making up of discourse practices. Ruth's inquiry pointed to locations in decision-making discourse, asking about the effects for people of being positioned in those places. Her inquiry pointed also to the ways in which decision-making discourse has been produced. In response Lee was positioned to reflect on the deconstructing:

> So that the words we use are quite important.

Lee joined Ruth in noticing the effects of the language practices of decision-making. Ruth then paused, deferring to Lee for a fuller explanation of what she was thinking.

> Well, I don't know...

Lee continued, making her point more clearly. Her question was not of Ruth, as supervisor, but rather it investigated discourse.

Well, the meaning of them, what's the meaning given to "goal setting" and "planning", "decision-making"?

Ruth's response was again from a version of the commentary position:

Yes, it's quite an agentive thing to do to think of yourself as a decision-maker.

In this version of the commentary position the supervisor is a commentator on discourse and positioning, using their supervisory authority to inquire about and thus offer comment on power relations. I think of the supervisor as putting their shoulder to the wheel of the deconstructive task from a position that is at one time both **knowing** and **inquiring**. The supervisor is familiar both with the deconstructive task and with the cultural stories by which the current speaking is produced. And they are inquiring as they join the counsellor in deconstructing inquiry, offering a contribution and asking whether or not it is of use to the counsellor's interest. The supervisor is making a claim to knowledge about a cultural story and offering it, as commentary, for the counsellor's use. It is an offering, not a prescription. Positioned *alongside* the counsellor, the supervisor is commenting on the discursive vista before them both, and in which they are both positioned themselves:

Yes, it's quite an agentive thing to do to think of yourself as a decision-maker.

Lee located her next question in the particular interest she had brought to the supervision, couples counselling. Continuing to produce a discourse of supervision as deconstructive inquiry, she said:

And in terms of, particularly couples, thinking about the couple relationship, and how does the couple relationship make decisions, or how, what style of decision-making does this couple have?

With this question Lee was working at the supervision agenda she had first set. Out of the mutual deconstructing inquiry she now had a question that gave a title to her supervision interest, *What style of decision-making does this couple have?* As

supervisor, Ruth continued to position herself alongside, refocusing her looking on the focus of Lee's looking, and noticing the detail that followed the focus, *style of decision making*, that Lee's looking had offered. In her next contribution to the dialogue Ruth joined the inquiry on the terms Lee had now produced:

> Yeah, and where did it come from? Where did the blue print for that [style of] decision-making come from? (Yeah) Who does it work best for? Who doesn't it work best for? Who reads the blue print well, and who is confused by how that blue print works? There's never been much written about it, and I haven't really thought about it before.

First Ruth offered a running string of deconstructing questions that asked about the pre-existing positions in decision making discourse. Then she changed focus in her last sentence, reflecting on her own position in relation with the knowledge that was being produced as she and Lee worked in the supervision. This reflection shows her stepping back from the inquiry and noticing its effects for her. She was a co-researcher. The inquiry was decentred: decision-making, not Lee, was its focus. However, Ruth noticed her own position as supervisor/researcher in the production of the inquiry: *I haven't really thought about it before*. In building collaborative relationship and engaging in collaborative inquiry, Ruth, too, was open to new learning. Within the supervision discourse being produced here, inquiry might be generative for the supervisor, too.

As supervision was constructed here, knowledge (about decision-making discourse) was produced in the work of the counsellor and supervisor in collaborative relation, generated by their mutual inquiry. They were "co-laboring" (Fine & Turner, 1997, p.237). The knowledge was not held by either of them before the conversation: knowledge was made up in their working together, alongside each other in collaborative inquiry. I notice that the extracts from the transcript-texts that I have offered here, without my authorial comments, would not make particularly evident to a reader who in this dialogue was the supervisor and who was the counsellor. The interest in the inquiry was mutual. The positioning in collaborative relation of counsellor and supervisor made such inquiry possible.

The collaboration at work here was both relational and epistemological. A shared epistemological stance produced mutually understandable invitations in their speaking: they appeared to know how to go on together. There was a shared assumption that deconstruction is a helpful practice and shared understanding of the deconstructing task. Lee and Ruth's investigation of the politics of decision making was further informing counselling practice, for Lee would have a richer understanding of the discursive context of her clients' lives. By Lee's invitation Lee and Ruth were calling into question the canon of decision-making discourse, producing an alternative account. Their positionings in relation with each other and in mutually intelligible moral orders supported them to know how to go on in their conversation. Their shared interest in the deconstructive task, and their shared understanding that this was the task of this supervision session produced the dialogue in which new meanings for practice were made.

Collaborating, and producing responsibility differently

Phase Four of the reflecting team supervision process included reflection on the processes of the first three phases of the supervision conversations. In the Phase Four review of the supervision from which this instance of practice (Extract 8.1) is extracted (Supervision 18), Lee commented on the power relation offered by the discursive practice of supervision as collaborative and generative inquiry:

> We're talking one competent person to another.

The commentary position responds to and invites a positioning as *competent.* However, a counsellor's positioning as competent does not negate supervisor responsibility, Lee went on to suggest. Speaking about Ruth's work as supervisor she noticed:

> It's a focussed conversation. There's still a responsibility that I was appreciating that you took, to explore those ideas, and to ask questions about those ideas.

Supervisor responsibility is being differently produced in Lee's speaking, as it was in the supervision just presented. According to this account, the supervisor is positioned as responsible for joining the counsellor in exploration and inquiry. A shared, deconstructing inquiry was at the centre of the conversation, as a purposeful strategy employed by the supervisor in joining the counsellor in their supervision interests. The responsibility taken here by both counsellor and supervisor was the researching of practice.

Collaborating in the co-production of knowledge

Responsibility is produced in thinking with each other about our practices, and the ethics of our practices. Lee might be understood to have been actively responding to the call to ethical practice in setting this supervision agenda. Noticing some effects for her clients of being positioned in decision-making discourse she wanted to investigate that discourse for the power relations it invoked. Ruth joined Lee's invitation that was, in effect, to *walk alongside* and *think with* her. This invitation constructed knowledge as a production of a community of thinkers, *thinking with* each other. Ideas would be generated in the thinking together. Ruth and Lee's conversation generated knowledge about decision-making that was not available to either of them before the conversation began: they were generating knowledge in the dialogical spaces between them. To employ the navigation metaphor, knowledge was not in or on already-established maps or charts, but was generated in the sailing, in the read*ings* counsellor and supervisor made of available reference points and made up as they produced their voyaging. The emphasis was on the spaces between, as they played the dialogue between them. For in this constructionist practice, to inquire was to produce knowledge: to ask the deconstructing question that Lee asked, *What style of decision-making does this couple have*? was to produce knowledge about decision-making practices. I suggest that Ruth's next move, *And where did it [the style] come from?*" (that is, what is the history of that style, how did it evolve?) was both dialogically and relationally responsive: she continued to hold the conversational centre open for inquiry. Both Lee and Ruth were drawing on their knowledge of cultural stories of decision-making in their inquiry: they were simultaneously bringing forward and unsettling familiar knowledge, and generating new possibilities for knowing. In contrast with the seemingly

unproblematic transfer of knowledge, from supervisor to counsellor, of the Holloway example reviewed in Chapter Three, here knowledge is for investigation with an expectation of generativity. In this way knowledge comes to be produced in the space between the speakers through the actions of both supervision partners: the production of authority is a collaborative, dialogic endeavour.

Assuming competence: a position for robust inquiry

Lee suggested that the supervision conversation (in Extract 8.1) had constructed both partners, counsellor and supervisor, as "competent". A number of times during the project, arguments were made for a supervision that assumed or overtly acknowledged counsellor competence and capability. Such an assumption produces a counsellor as agentive in acting with responsibility in the monitoring of their own practice. Anne spoke in Research Meeting One, of preferring a supervision that *normalises not knowing, not knowing how to do it, or feeling like you did it badly. To do it badly*, she suggested, *doesn't take away from your capabilities, and your credibility and your ethics as a practitioner*: it's *just normal*. And, she continued, *It's not about being a novice or a learner or needing supervision*. Not knowing is constructed then, not as pathology, nor inadequacy, nor beginner status, nor as a vacancy in need of the insertion of supervisor knowledge, but as an opportunity for (collaborative) investigation.

There are two dimensions to Anne's claim. Firstly, she was speaking in relation with an idea that was gaining strength in the group about celebration in contrast to a focus on problems in supervision. The celebration metaphor is a focus of Chapter Eleven. In relation with the idea of celebration, Anne was making a claim here for the value of rigorous investigation of problems. The second dimension to Anne's claim is to do with theorising identity. To take up a discursive position for robust investigation of practice difficulties does not speak the truth of a counsellor's professional identity as *novice, beginner, or deficient*, she was saying. It is possible in supervision for a counsellor to explore difficulties in ways that acknowledge the temporary aspect of that positioning.

Later Anne continued,

> Or, kind of like using the supervision process also to explore those times you don't know what to do, or felt you really stuffed up. You know, what put you in that position? What was over your eyes? What was holding your hands [behind your back]? What was keeping you there? And to identify them [those restraints]. Like more of a learning process... And not look at them [the restraints] too carefully [or too cautiously, but rather robustly]; let's really investigate them. And you can investigate the problem from a position of security rather than insecurity.

In this account, the supervisor is invited into a *thinking with* position, in a robust co-investigation of the restraints upon the counsellor in their practice. Again, the invitation is to a collaborative, *alongside* investigation of the discursive vista. Counsellor capacity and competence are assumed. However, the discursive conditions in which they were temporarily overridden or less available are investigated. The questions Anne offered, above, for an investigation of the restraints the counsellor might be experiencing are similar to the questions that inform this analysis. What discourses were at work producing the problem? How was the counsellor positioned: *What was over your eyes*? *What was keeping you there?* Anne asked. In Anne's speaking supervision is constructed as an investigation of the production of ourselves as counsellors, as we assume meta-discursive positions that enable us to *really investigate.* The counsellor is positioned as a robust investigator of the discursive production of their practice.

I go on now to explore an extract from Supervision 4 that illustrates supervision produced on the terms of which Anne spoke. In this extract the counsellor will be seen working as a robust and rigorous inquirer into her own practice as an effect of being positioned as competent, capable and ethical in her own and the supervisor's regard.

Extract 8.2: Assuming competence in inquiry about practice

Emma is counsellor and Di is supervisor. The extract is from Supervision 4.

Emma introduced her supervision agenda with a self-monitoring presentation:

Extract 8.2: Assuming competence in inquiry about practice

Emma is counsellor and Di is supervisor. The extract is from Supervision 4.

Emma I want to talk about a kind of recurring sense of frustration with a certain sort of client, and how, I don't really want to talk about the details of this client, I want to just talk about me. I mean, I'm not happy to settle for that for me as a counsellor and to be feeling like that for that person.

Di So you're not happy until you settle this frustration (*yeah*) that's blocking your [client-counsellor] relationship.

Emma No, actually, even irritation, yeah, blocking the relationship. Yeah, it's not a useful feeling for me to have that as her counsellor.

Di You said frustration, even irritation. Can you...[say some more about that]?

Emma Well, that's what it sounds like. It sounds really horrible, but this person really irritates me, there's a certain type of woman, and there's certain types of issues; and it's something to do with different meaning, and different expectations... It's not a sense that I don't understand what's trapping a woman, or keeping her in [a relationship], or how painful it might be to investigate her relationship, or how difficult it might be to leave or to stay there. [further description] And I'm confused, and so that doesn't seem a useful way because what these clients - I don't like to say "these clients" - but there is that same sort of feeling they just won't answer that question, but they move on to something else. [...]

Di So this particular problem story kind of keeps recurring (yeah) around women and relationships, and them kind of taking less for themselves than you might want for them?

> I want to talk about a kind of recurring sense of frustration with a certain sort of client, and how, I don't really want to talk about the details of this client, I want to just talk about me. I mean, I'm not happy to settle for that for me as a counsellor and to be feeling like that for that person.

Emma's presentation of her supervision interest constructed the work of supervision as counsellor-focussed rather than client-focussed. She positioned herself as seeking something better for herself as a counsellor and so for her relation with the person who was her client. The invitation to Di, as supervisor, was to centre her inquiry on Emma's experiences of frustration, and on Emma's sense of dissonance between her preferences for her practice and *having done badly* in particular aspects of practice.

Di's response stepped aside a little from the counsellor centre that Emma had offered – *I just want to talk about me* - but offered back a possible centring on the counsellor-client relationship:

> So you're not happy until you settle this frustration (*yeah*) that's blocking your [client-counsellor] relationship.

Emma accepted the focus on relationship offered by Di, renaming the problem and noting its effect on the counselling relationship:

> No, actually, even irritation, yeah, blocking the relationship. Yeah, it's not a useful feeling for me to have that as her counsellor.

Emma had requested that Di's inquiry attend to her and her experience in her work. Di took that request up:

> You said frustration, <u>even</u> irritation. Can you...[say some more about that]?

Emma continued to explore her concern:

Emma Yeah. And not ...[Pause] What do they do with me? ... I might even ask [the client] that question [about moving from seeing the effects of the problem on them to crediting themselves with producing the problem] again, but it doesn't feel comfortable asking it again. It feels almost like I get into a little bit of a battle with this client; and if I want to keep interested then it's kind of not that good a feeling. My heart might not be in the right place. I could describe it.

Di And this is when Irritation starts coming in?

Emma Yeah. Or else I just sit back, I sort of lose my interest, or connection, with them. And the overall thing is with, ...I notice, I mean, I see these people, and see their names booked for that week, and I'm thinking. I hope they don't come, and I don't want it [that thought]. I don't like how I feel, and I don't like how I feel about myself; how I feel as a counsellor. I don't like my attitude.

Di So some of your potence as a counsellor gets taken away by these struggles against, against this difference that somehow...

Emma It makes me feel like "counsellors are nice people, and you're not actually nice." Yeah, I feel bad about my negative feelings towards this person.

Di Would it be helpful for me to ask you about <u>that</u> [negative feelings] or would it be more useful to lay out the problem territory that these clients bring that gets you captured in these feelings that would have you feel so bad?

Emma No, I don't know that I'll be able to answer very easily, but the problem territory that they bring is, claiming their own right not to be hit, or to have their own way; they want to just feel okay about themselves and make some of their own decisions, the effects of that on their ...This woman that kind of has raised it again for me, has left her marriage for two or three years, but is feeling drawn back in to try again; but she lays out for me in quite explicit detail the reasons why she doesn't want to do that, and I ask her

> Well, that's what it sounds like. It sounds really horrible, but this person really irritates me, there's a certain type of woman, and there's certain types of issues; and it's something to do with different meaning, and different expectations... It's not a sense that I don't understand what's trapping a woman, or keeping her in [a relationship], or how painful it might be to investigate her relationship, or how difficult it might be to leave or to stay there. [further description] And I'm confused, and so that doesn't seem a useful way because what these clients - I don't like to say "these clients" - but there is that same sort of feeling they just won't answer that question, but they move on to something else.

Emma noticed the positioning in relation with clients that *Irritation* called her into: clients became objectified as *these clients*. As she was speaking she noticed the effects on relationship of those ways of speaking: *it sounds really horrible*. The subtext of Emma's observations is that she prefers something different: she doesn't want to *settle for that as a counsellor*, as she said at the beginning. I suggest that the reflexivity of Emma's observations on the position-in-relation that ways of speaking she was using offered her, produce her as a counsellor working at responsibility. She is positioned as responsible for the ethics of her practice.

Like Lee in Extract 8.1, Emma was agentive in producing the tools for the supervision conversation. In this agentive position she used the ideas offered to her by the theoretical resources – such as noticing the terms of her speaking - which produced her counselling work. The *these clients* description was simultaneously used and undermined as Emma described her experience of her *hands being tied behind her back*.

As the conversation continued Di was not caught by the problematic experience that had been frustrating Emma. Nor was she caught by the problematic identity description of Emma that the frustration-problem had offered:

questions about change and difference and other things and she's really clear that she hasn't noticed any change or any difference [in her partner]. She gives me examples of even extreme abusive - to me, and she actually defines it as [abusive] too - behaviour that he's doing right now as he's trying to get her to come back. Then she just seems to switch into a ... like a child or something...

Di How would you understand that?

Emma Well, I don't understand it. I just don't get it. And that leads me to have frustration and irritation [...].

Di Can I just go back a couple of tracks? I am listening you talking about your own experience, but just before I come to it, can I ask, (*yeah*) How do you think your client is understanding it? [Brief description of 'it', the problematic phenomenon followed.]

Emma Maybe it's really confusing for her as well.

Di I've asked her things like that. And I've asked her..."

...

Di What would you usually do when clients are confused between two...?

Emma I think that if I was confused I'd usually ask her and let her know why I was confused, or wondering about that. I just think, I don't know if I have, but I'd maybe ask her if she had some confusion about it. I don't know what I normally do other than bring it up.

Di I mean, what have you generally found to be the effects of confusion in people's lives, when you have asked them about it?

Di So this particular problem story kind of keeps recurring (yeah) around women and relationships, and them kind of taking less for themselves than you might want for them?

Emma Yeah. And not …[Pause] What do they do with me? … I might even ask [the client] that question [about moving from seeing the effects of the problem on them to crediting themselves with producing the problem] again, but it doesn't feel comfortable asking it again. It feels almost like I get into a little bit of a battle with this client; and if I want to keep interested then it's kind of not that good a feeling. My heart might not be in the right place. I could describe it.

Di And this is when Irritation starts coming in?

Emma Yeah. Or else I just sit back, I sort of lose my interest, or connection, with them. And the overall thing is with, …I notice, I mean, I see these people, and see their names booked for that week, and I'm thinking, I hope they don't come, and I don't want it [that thought]. I don't like how I feel, and I don't like how I feel about myself; how I feel as a counsellor. I don't like my attitude.

Di So some of your potence as a counsellor gets taken away by these struggles against, against this difference that somehow…

In Di's last contribution we see her speaking of two positions in which Emma is represented: Di named the absent (in that it had not been directly named) presence of Emma's competence as a counsellor and the position of struggle in which the problem had located Emma in its disturbance of her preferences for her practice. Di was both "credit[ing] the reality Emma was expressing and "pressing it toward evolution" (Gergen, 1997, p.251). Parker suggested that " a deconstructing therapy enables an exploration of the location of the subject" (1998, p.74). These early exchanges in a deconstructing supervision conversation opened space for inquiry that decentred the counsellor in its interest in the counsellor's location, in the counsellor-in-relation. And at the same time the supervision conversation centred the

Emma Well, not knowing where they are, where they stand, what to do; decisions are hard to make. Confusion makes decisions hard to know; it's hard to trust yourself, to know what you really are thinking.

Di And I was thinking, what does that mean, then, for somebody who's in this territory [gestures] that we are talking about [the discursive positioning of the client]?

Emma It would mean that she is finding it difficult to trust herself in either way. Confused about what she sees and what she doesn't see, what she knows, and what she doesn't know, what she wants and what she doesn't want. Can't make a decision with one leg in each camp. [Pause.] Yeah, yeah, she could really be done over by that confusion.

Di And, amongst all the knowledge that you've got about violence and abuse, what do you know about the relationship between those things, you know, between the tactics of violence and the tactics of confusion?

Emma I guess I think it is one of the effects of abuse, and the effect of abuse and violence is confusion, losing trust in yourself, not being sure about what you see and what you know – and it's **really** helpful for me to remember this.

Di In what way?

Emma It shifts my perception of her a little bit again, being able to see the effects of confusion. The effects of confusion leave her really immobilised. That feels really helpful as a possibility in my work with her.

Di How does it [remembering] shift your perception? What difference does it make to your perception?

Emma It makes me see her and then see the effects of confusion rather than see her as, you know, a 'stupid woman' – which feels much better.

counsellor: Di followed very closely what Emma's understanding of the problem was and what her supervision interests were. Emma was not the problem: the problem was the problem. Emma's knowledge of the problem was being brought forward as a resource to the conversation. Further, Di positioned herself as working to understand. "The small and the ordinary" (Weingarten, 1998) moves of an ordinary supervision conversation worked to engage respectfully with the counsellor's current concerns, a sense of having *done it badly*, while maintaining a shared sense of a competency unthreatened by the current concerns.

Anne had suggested that restraints on a counsellor should be *really investigated*: *What is over your eyes, what is keeping you in that position?* As the Supervision 4 conversation continued, Emma spoke about how the Irritation problem was positioning her:

> It makes me feel like "counsellors are nice people, and you're not actually nice." Yeah, I feel bad about my negative feelings towards this person.

Di now sought guidance from Emma about where to centre her inquiry:

> Would it be helpful for me to ask you about <u>that</u> [negative feelings] or would it be more useful to lay out the problem territory that these clients bring that gets you captured in these feelings that would have you feel so bad?

In response to Di's inquiry, Emma immediately took up a description of the discursive context, *the problem territory*, which was producing the *negative feelings* for her. She began:

> No, I don't know that I'll be able to answer very easily, but the problem territory that they bring is, claiming their own right not to be hit, or to have their own way; they want to just feel okay about themselves and make some of their own decisions, the effects of that on their …This woman that kind of has raised it again for me, has left her marriage for two or three years, but is feeling drawn back in to try again; but she lays out for me in quite

This is really important to me to make that shift back to seeing the effect of it on her. [...]

Di Why do you think, how do you think you got conned in this instance - because I think [pause]; I know you well enough to know that you're not usually conned into blaming clients?

...

...

Di So that there's a real cost for you in kind of gathering up so many stories and in some ways it would seem so much easier if you could say, "Well, send her to assertiveness training, it's her problem". But instead the stories make a sense to you which is really sad.

Emma Incredibly sad; and I am remembering the hope of it as well, and what women do do, and how they do retrieve their lives and relationships and children. and create other possibilities for themselves as well.

...

Emma Yeah. It's important for me to remember that. And to remember that if she [this particular client] wants to leave she can as well, because she's, well there's evidence of her strength as well, in identifying and naming [the abuse]. In some ways it's amazing that she's named what was happening in the relationship as abuse because of powerful cultural and personal invitations to name it as stuff that she brought about and made to happen.

explicit detail the reasons why she doesn't want to do that, and I ask her questions about change and difference and other things and she's really clear that she hasn't noticed any change or any difference [in her partner]. She gives me examples of even extreme abusive - to me, and she actually defines it as [abusive] too - behaviour that he's doing right now as he's trying to get her to come back. Then she just seems to switch into a … like a child or something…

Di continued to take an inquiry position, making space for the understandings already available to the conversation before offering any others:

How would you understand that?

Emma Well, I don't understand it. I just don't get it. And that leads me to have frustration and irritation […].

Di Can I just go back a couple of tracks? I am listening to you talking about your own experience, but just before I come to it, can I ask, (*yeah*) How do you think your client is understanding it? [Brief description of 'it', the problematic phenomenon followed.]

Emma Maybe it's really confusing for her as well.

Di has continued to pursue an understanding of the discursive conditions within which Emma had struggled to position herself well to work with her client. In Emma's last response, *Maybe it's really confusing for her as well*, there is some change in her positioning. But that change was immediately interrupted as Emma continued:

I've asked her things like that. And I've asked her…

Di then interrupted this re-emergence of the problematic position and the echoes it brought of the *Have you tried?: Yes, I've done that* set of discursive practices

discussed in the previous chapter. She interrupted by noticing the alternative position from which Emma had just spoken, *Maybe it's really confusing for her as well*, and responding to that invitation. Di asked:

> What would you usually do when clients are confused between two…?

In this inquiry Di's question looked to Emma's wider practice to identify resources for the current problem. Di was continuing to assume competence and on that basis to research Emma's practice. Taking an informant position and drawing on her practice knowledge, Emma replied:

> I think that if I was confused I'd usually ask her and let her know why I was confused, or wondering about that. I just think, I don't know if I have, but I'd maybe ask her if she had some confusion about it. I don't know what I normally do other than bring it up.

The next piece of dialogue was not all audible on the tape and so there is a gap in the transcript-text. However, Emma said that maybe confusion was *immobilising* her client, and so there could be value in *making confusion clear and speaking about it*.

The inquiry continued as Di asked,

> I mean, what have you generally found to be the effects of confusion in people's lives, when you have asked them about it?

Di's speaking invited Emma into a position as informant, authoritative about practice on the basis of her practice knowledge. Emma said:

> Well, not knowing where they are, where they stand, what to do; decisions are hard to make. Confusion makes decisions hard to know; it's hard to trust yourself, to know what you really are thinking.

Di continued:

> And I was thinking, what does that mean, then, for somebody who's in this territory [gestures] that we are talking about [the discursive positioning of the client]?

Di located herself as a co-inquirer, *I was thinking.* The tone of the archaeological investigation (Monk, 1997) was one of mutual sifting and looking and investigating. Replying, Emma now shifted her focus from the general knowledge she had about confusion to the specific instance that had caused her to feel disturbed by her response:

> It would mean that she is finding it difficult to trust herself in either way. Confused about what she sees and what she doesn't see, what she knows, and what she doesn't know, what she wants and what she doesn't want. Can't make a decision with one leg in each camp. [Pause.] Yeah, yeah, she could really be done over by that confusion.

The story of practice that had offered Emma the problematic positioning (of capture by-irritation-and-frustration and a *not a nice person* self-description) was suspended as this other account was produced. Other practice-knowledge had been brought forward to the conversation as Emma's described the positions Confusion might be offering her client. On the basis of this practice-knowledge, Emma's problematic positioning in relation with her client was disturbed. Emma had now spoken of her client as *done over by confusion*, rather than as *a person who irritates*. The concern about her positioning as a *not-nice person* was being addressed as Emma brought forward her knowledge of the discursive context. Emma herself appeared to be beginning to be less *done over* by the slippage between the account of her professional self that frustration and irritation had offered and the account of herself with which she identified.

Continuing the inquiry into Emma's practice wisdom, her knowledge of the cultural stories that produce problems for clients, Di asked,

> And, amongst all the knowledge that you've got about violence and abuse, what do you know about the relationship between those things, you know, between the tactics of violence and the tactics of confusion?

Emma replied,

> I guess I think it is one of the effects of abuse, and the effect of abuse and violence is confusion, losing trust in yourself, not being sure about what you see and what you know – and it's **really** helpful for me to remember this.

Slowly and reflectively, I suggest, an account was being put together by researching the counsellor's knowledge. Although Emma had begun by saying that she did understand what traps women and how painful it is for them to investigate an abusive relationship, she was now re-connecting with that knowledge in ways that were helpful to her: *it's **really** helpful for me to remember this*. Emma now noticed the effect of her retelling and reconnecting with these knowledges. Not taking for granted how the remembering was helpful, but rather working to thicken the story, Di asked:

> In what way?

Emma spoke of the repositioning the remembering had offered her:

> It shifts my perception of her a little bit again, being able to see the effects of confusion. The effects of confusion leave her really immobilised. That feels really helpful as a possibility in my work with her.

Emma was noticing the difference in the position in relation to which she was now called. She perceived, now, both how her client was positioned by confusion in her struggle to stay separate from an abusive relationship, and how her own remembering of these knowledges repositioned her in relation with her client. Di went on to exercise her responsibility as a supervisor in inviting Emma to thicken her account of this more helpful positioning. Di asked:

> How does it [remembering] shift your perception? What difference does it make to your perception?

The inquiry worked to continue to bring forth Emma's knowledge. She now spoke explicitly about having restored herself to her preferred position in relation with clients, and to her preferred understanding of people and problems. She spoke to her chosen epistemological stance, noticing the way in which she had lost her footing:

> It makes me see her and then see the effects of confusion rather than see her as, you know, a 'stupid woman' – which feels much better.
>
> This is really important to me to make that shift back to seeing the effect of it on her. […]

Emma was taking a self-commentary position, making explicit the principles that had been infringed in the earlier, problematic positioning. I point out this self-commentary position, because I argue that the kind of supervision conversation that has been going on here produces a practitioner who is reflective and reflexive in these ways. In standing back from the instrumentality of supervision practice, counsellor and supervisor were able to examine the discursive vista in which they were situated, and to notice their noticing of their positionings in that vista. On discursive terms this is reflective practice for counsellors, investigating our positionings in relation with our clients in order to produce ethical practice. As counsellors we attend actively to the work of making up accounts of counselling work, attending to the positions to which we are called and purposefully selecting amongst them. We notice the moral orders in which our work might be situated and we and our clients might be positioned in relation.

Somehow, the dominant cultural story that describes as *stupid* women who struggle and fail to stay out of abusive relationships had separated Emma from the knowledge she had garnered in her work with clients, knowledge that offered her

preferred understandings of a complex area of practice. There was still more work to be done in the supervision, however. Emma had begun by saying that she did not want to talk about the details of the client, but about herself. Di turned her inquiry to Emma, asking about the restraints that had left Emma telling a story that positioned her in disrespectful relation with her client:

> Why do you think, how do you think you got conned in this instance – because I think [pause]; I know you well enough to know that you're not usually conned into blaming clients?

This was the deconstructing work of which I have quoted Anne speaking: *what was over her eyes, holding her hands [behind her back]*, separating the counsellor from her preferred practice? Di had now initiated an investigation of these *blinding and restraining forces*. Not only was Emma's position in relation to her client to be *put right* through the collaborative investigation of a discourse of supervision as researching-counsellor-knowledge. The disturbing of Emma's story of her professional practice preferences might also need to be *put right*. As I use the *put right* phrase (used in Chapter Seven by Kate) advisedly here, I notice that it is not the supervisor who has been putting right. Rather, she has walked alongside the counsellor, working with her to bring to the centre of the dialogical space that which the counsellor knows. Together they have produced an account that has worked to *put right* on the terms that the counsellor had sought. The putting right has been done through the co-researching of knowledge, through inquiry that supported the counsellor to reconnect with that knowledge from which she had been separated.

In order to complete this account I go on to offer a brief summary of the rest of the Phase One conversation, and conclude with the dialogue between Emma and Di at the end of that phase.

The conversation went on to weave connections between Emma's life, and her work, and her work with this client, and the discursive and extra-discursive production of the struggles for women to lead lives on their own and lives free of violence. In this conversation, Emma's relationship with her client and with her own account of her

professional self were both restored to her preference and storied more fully. The conversation was both restorative and generative.

As the Phase One supervision conversation came to a close, Di responded to Emma's speaking of the sadness for her of the stories of women's struggles in leading a life on their own, and of the ways their struggles are conceived by traditional psychological ideas.

> So that there's a real cost for you in kind of gathering up so many stories and in some ways it would seem so much easier if you could say, "Well, send her to assertiveness training, it's her problem". But instead the stories make a sense to you which is really sad.

The pull of dominant discourse and the strength it takes for a counsellor to stand against the practices dominant discourse produces was acknowledged. In this way the supervision had been *about me* as Emma had asked at the beginning. What are the effects for Emma of working as a counsellor with women struggling to free their lives of violence in their relationships? What position calls are made to a counsellor by the accounts available to explain violence in intimate relationships? What positions in relation with clients are thereby offered? These were the questions the tools of discourse and positioning were producing behind the scenes to constitute the inquiry at which Emma and Di worked together. For counsellors do not live outside the discourses which position our clients. The inquiry brought forward to the centre of the conversation the counsellor's knowledge of the discourses which offered her terms upon which she could give accounts of this work. I suggest that in this way counsellor and supervisor collaborated in the production of a supervision that told a story of the counsellor's professional life and work in such a way that her client would be well served: the positions in discourse, and locations in text, available to the counsellor to speak from had been dialogized. At a very personal level Di and Emma had worked to deconstruct discourses of women and relationship, making visible the costs that women pay in and in leaving abusive relationships. And the cost to a counsellor of this work was also acknowledged: *so there is a real cost to you...*

To Di's reflection on the cost to her of this work, Emma replied:

> Incredibly sad; and I am remembering the hope of it as well, and what women do do, and how they do retrieve their lives and relationships and children and create other possibilities for themselves as well.

The counsellor had worked to position herself well, in respectful relation, for her ongoing work with her client and for her work with other clients. Again clearly locating her epistemological preferences, Emma brought the Phase One supervision conversation to an end, saying,

> Yeah. It's important for me to remember that. And to remember that if she [this particular client] wants to leave she can as well, because she's, well there's evidence of her strength as well, in identifying and naming [the abuse]. In some ways it's amazing that she's named what was happening in the relationship as abuse because of powerful cultural and personal invitations to name it as stuff that she brought about and made to happen.

Deconstructing supervision: producing ethical action

In Supervision 4 from which Extract 8.2 is taken, counsellor and supervisor produced a supervision that could address a counsellor's *having done badly* without in any way pathologising the counsellor. Nor did they have to call on instrumental or instructional practice. I suggest that counsellor and supervisor have been engaged in a *deconstructing* supervision on the terms in which Davies (1998) offered: once a shared understanding of the discursive context of the problem had been produced counsellor and supervisor put *irritation* and *frustration* "under erasure" (p.139) by investigating their discursive production. In a deconstructing supervision Emma and Di gave attention to, named, and evaluated the terms available for their speaking in supervision and for Emma's counselling practice. Those terms were produced not by Emma, but by the discourses in which Emma and her clients and other women are positioned. In this naming and investigating of available terms, professional practice was located not just as the production of an individual counsellor (who was at risk of being

judged *not a nice person*), but as a production of the ways of speaking that cultural and professional discourses offer. This supervision conversation provided a dialogical space wherein the counsellor could give an account of the places in which she chose to stand to locate her practice, acknowledging the struggle that standing there might involve. For a deconstructing supervision, I argue, works in a similar way to a deconstructing psychotherapy, described by Larner as addressing, in practice, issues of "power, justice and ethics" and, in theory, its own institutional "power and authority" (1999, p.41). The supervision itself worked on these terms, addressing power, justice and ethics, and power and authority. For example the counsellor's (personal and professional) knowledge of the struggles of women on their own was privileged above the supervisor's; a rich account (not included in the excerpt presented here) of the discursive and extra-discursive conditions of life for women leaving relationships to bring up children on their own was produced; all participants, including the client, were held in respect. The counsellor presented herself at the beginning as a moral agent: according to the standards she set herself for respectful practice she would not settle for the discomfort being produced by the experiences of frustration and irritation she was experiencing. The deconstructing inquiry produced in collaborative relationship continued to bring forward the counsellor's agency: her prior professional and personal knowledge, her experiences, her self-monitoring observations were all grist to the inquiry's mill. In these ways the supervision worked to position the counsellor to produce herself as a moral agent in ethical relation with clients in her counselling practices.

Researching practice

Extract 8.2 and its analysis have shown some of the effects of assuming counsellor competence and investigating the personal and professional knowledge from which the counsellor had become separated. The first supervision extract in this chapter, Extract 8.1, showed Lee and Ruth deconstructing decision-making discourse, co-producing new knowledge. In this next example from practice I return to Supervision 18 from which Extract 8.1 was taken. The example illustrates the slower, purposeful and deliberate processes by which Lee's interest in interrogating supervision discourse was storied as the supervision began. Lee's interest had arisen from her work with a couple and she was asking how she could

Extract 8.3: Counsellor as researcher of practice

Lee is counsellor and Ruth is supervisor. The example is again from Supervision 18, at an earlier point in the Phase One conversation than Extract 8.1.

Ruth So you were noticing how they were kind of trying to make that decision, and [you were] asking them some questions that would help them work out when they would be able to make that decision? But you began to wonder, in general, about...

Lee Yes, and I'm thinking - I mean I think I asked a few questions about decision-making - but it would be probably quite useful [now] to just develop some questions around making a decision.

Ruth Yeah. What was it in particular that made you start thinking of that question [about decision making] in a broader context?

What was it that you noticed, or?

...

Ruth So, one of the questions *you asked* them was...

...

So, I am wondering if that is what led *you to think...*

...

What attracted *you* about that one?

...

So *you have noticed* that the stories couples have about decision making...

...

And *you have got some ideas* about...

Lee Yes I have lots of ideas about that, and I think they centre around, I think decision-making, traditionally, would come from using a model...

be more helpful, generally, to clients, particularly couples, when it came to making decisions.

In Extract 8.3 below I emphasise the work of Ruth as supervisor, extracting her contributions from the dialogue. I do that, not to present supervision as supervisor-constructed, or supervisor-centred. Rather, I emphasise Ruth's work to draw attention to the particular practices she employed in bringing forward and developing an account of Lee's supervision agenda. She did not assume that she understood the history of Lee's supervision agenda. However, she did assume its genesis was worth storying. In that storying Ruth's speaking was intensely interwoven with the second person pronoun, *you*. The use of the second person pronoun invited Lee to take up a first person account of the history of how she had, as a reflective practitioner, researched her practice and developed the idea of deconstructing decision making discourse. Ruth's use of the second person pronoun made available locations in the text where Lee was a producer of practice and of reflection on practice.

Extract 8.3: Counsellor as researcher of practice

Lee is counsellor and Ruth is supervisor. The example is again from Supervision 18, at an earlier point in the Phase One conversation than Extract 8.1.

In response to Lee's explaining the particular counselling circumstances that had produced her current supervision inquiry about decision-making, Ruth paraphrased:

> So you were noticing how they were kind of trying to make that decision, and [you were] asking them some questions that would help them work out when they would be able to make that decision? But you began to wonder, in general, about...

Lee went on:

> Yes, and I'm thinking - I mean I think I asked a few questions about decision-making - but it would be probably quite useful [now] to just develop some questions around making a decision.

Ruth continued to research the history of Lee's interest:

> Yeah. What was it in particular that made you start thinking of that question [about decision making] in a broader context?

As Lee hesitated Ruth asked:

> What was it that you noticed, or?

By this speaking Lee was positioned as an active producer of practice: the history of her interest in investigating decision-making discourse could be more richly storied, with Ruth. In that storying Lee was the subjective subject, telling the story in response to the invitation, to tell a first person account in response to the invitation offered by Ruth's use of the second person pronoun.

As Ruth worked to bring forward this account at this beginning point in the supervision conversation, her words continued to highlight locations in text where Lee might tell her story:

> So, one of the questions *you asked* them was…
>
> So, I am wondering if that is what led *you to think*…
>
> What attracted *you* about that one?
>
> So *you have noticed* that the stories couples have about decision making…
>
> And *you have got some ideas* about…

In response to this last invitation Lee replied:

> Yes I have lots of ideas about that, and I think they centre around, I think decision-making, traditionally, would come from using a model…

Ruth's inquiry invited Lee to notice her own noticing, to notice the subtlety and nuance of her noticing, to notice the history of her noticing, and to notice the possibilities her noticing was producing: and thereby to notice her noticing differently. Her noticing could then be storied. Ruth's use of the second person pronoun opened space and structure in dialogue for Lee to take up a first person account of herself researching and producing her practice. Lee was then well positioned in a discourse of supervision as a site of generative reflection: she was positioned as resourceful both to the supervision and in her counselling practice. She was invited into a reflective stance first in the storying in the landscape of action the details of her noticing in the instance of practice. Then reflective practice was further developed as the inquiry moved from the landscape of action to the discursive field, from the work with the particular couple to the discourse of decision-making.

The example in this briefer extract adds to the account I have been building, in this chapter, of supervision as a site of the production and generation of knowledge. Here, counsellors are visible in the production of knowledge and the production of supervision practice in ways that they tend not to be in much of the supervision literature or when supervision is performed on the terms of a discourse of supervisor responsibility. Further, the supervisor is decentred: her inquiry brings forward a story of the counsellor as a knowledge resource. In the accounts offered by the data presented in this chapter the emphasis of supervision is on dialogic practice that positions the counsellor as an active producer of practice, and a producer of knowledge in and for practice. Supervision enriches the descriptions of the positions the counsellor might take up as an ethical agent in their counselling practice and so enlarges the accessibility of those positions.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has demonstrated, with extracts of supervision conversations, the orientation to knowledge for practice that constructionist thinking produced in this project. In some instances supervision inquiry focused on counsellor knowledge and experience, noticing the strategies that had produced that knowledge and experience. This strategy might be called research of practice for practice. In

Extract 8.1 the inquiry was decentred, as the supervisor joined the counsellor in investigating the knowledges that cultural and professional stories produce. In this strategy, in generating the possibilities for professional knowledge to be produced otherwise, the supervisor joined the counsellor as a co-researcher for practice. In these examples, the emphasis was on opening dialogic space, so that in supervision a counsellor was overtly positioned to generate practice. As well, not only supervisors, but also counsellors were shown to be engaging actively with the production of ethics for counselling practice, paying attention to the effects of the moral orders in which they are thus positioned in their relationships with clients.

Chapter Nine

Producing constructionist supervision practice: The politics of practice

Introduction

This chapter continues the presentation of data, focusing again on the production of processes of collaborative inquiry in constructionist supervision practice. As part of an ongoing deconstruction of the discourse of supervisor responsibility the chapter first investigates the collaborative exercise of responsibility in the presence of concerns about client safety. The chapter moves on to focus on responsibility for inquiry about the politics of practice. I analyse a supervision session that directly addressed the question of the sort of professional subject that might be produced in supervision. A third, brief, example shows counsellor and supervisor working to position the counsellor well to respond to the practices of relational ethics.

These examples continue to construct supervision as a collaborative task that pays attention to positions in relation. The counsellor is positioned not at the margins of the account, but in relationship and visible, well located to produce ethical counselling practice. The examples offer instances of the practice of a deconstructing supervision, one that takes a metadiscursive orientation to both the power and authority of its own practices and to those of the profession.

Quality assurance: responsibility, assessment and safety

One of the more central concerns of the familiar expression of supervision as problem-talk has been the assessment of the safety of our counselling work, and of the safety of those we work with at critical times in their lives. This is the safety-ensuring extension of the *back-up* and *being put right,* of which Kate spoke (Chapter Seven). It is in the matter of safety that the discourse of supervisor responsibility is most reassuring, to counsellors and employers, and for the profession's credibility. Critical situations for clients produce the most directive supervision (Tracey, Ellickson, & Sherry, 1989). When client safety is a concern,

Extract 9.1. Dialogic assessment and producing responsibility

Deb is counsellor and Jean is supervisor in Supervision 16.

Deb And, I mean, I'm just bringing it to supervision, really to say this is what I've done. This is the sort of letter I got. This is what I've done. I feel quite powerless to do, I don't know what else I should do, or if there is anything else I should be doing really. That's what I've brought it up today for, just to let it be known (yeah) and see.... Yeah.

Jean So you're talking about feeling powerless because she's [Georgina] saying, "No [to coming to counselling]", but you've had a letter [from her] that spoke of real desperation?

...

Jean And knowing Georgina, you made some kind of judgements about the meaning of that letter, given the history of [your earlier work together]?

...

Jean And you talked about "it [some aspects of the letter] could be 'teenage stuff' that blows over, but knowing Georgina". Can you say some more about that?

...

Jean So there are things that you know about Georgina that suggest to you that where in some ways with [your daughter] you might take these things with a grain of salt, knowing that she'll ride these...

...

And what effect [do you think that would have had], knowing what you do of Georgina?

...

What would you make of the silences?

...

So, now, what are you making of the silences?

Deb I don't know. I just don't know. I don't know how to read it. I don't know if it's because of not feeling supported, or heard, or safe with me, or not really wanting to take counselling up for that reason, not knowing who else to

the discourse of supervisor responsibility is most likely to call supervisors into positions where they exercise responsibility in directive action. Safety concerns are more likely to call supervisors and counsellors into using rulebooks than constructing new charts. Positions in collaborative practice may be more difficult to access in critical situations. In interrogating the discourse of supervisor responsibility I also need to consider if the collaborative practices of knowledge production illustrated in the previous chapter are effective and ethical when an assessment of client safety is needed.

An example of practice where the central concern was the safety of a client is the next focus of this account.

Extract 9.1. Dialogic assessment and producing responsibility

Deb is counsellor and Jean is supervisor in Supervision 16.

The supervision began with Deb speaking with Jean about a concern she had about recent contact with Georgina, a young woman client who had taken a break from counselling. Deb had previously spoken with Jean in supervision about earlier aspects of her work with Georgina. Deb's concern as she began Supervision 16 was that she had received a worrying letter from Georgina that included a request to see Deb. However, Georgina had not come to the appointment that had been set up by phone, and when Deb had phoned Georgina again, she had found Georgina very hard to speak with and Georgina had turned down Deb's offer of a further appointment. After telling the sequence of events, Deb said:

> And, I mean, I'm just bringing it to supervision, really to say this is what I've done. This is the sort of letter I got. This is what I've done. I feel quite powerless to do, I don't <u>know</u> what else I should do, or if there is anything else I should be doing really. That's what I've brought it up today for, just to let it be known (yeah) and see.... Yeah.

Deb had taken up a particular version of *reporting in* as discursive practice in supervision. She had brought this story to *let it be known*. The idea of *letting it be known* invokes questions of supervisor responsibility. This question is much less clear in the New Zealand context, where supervisor responsibility is not subject of

call to, and, or whether it's something else entirely. I don't know. (Mmm) I feel like there's not a lot that I can know about that.

Jean Yeah. The one, you know, one of the wonderings I've got is that, how much it was the problem that she wrote to you about, the despair and isolation and desperation, (*yeah, right*) that was keeping her quiet [when you phoned]. Do you think it (*Yeah.*)? (Pause).
That a young woman (*yeah*) with whom you previously had a thriving (*yeah*) relationship (*yeah*)...

Deb But not being able to speak, and not even to be able to say anything is very familiar for her. Yeah. Yeah, I think it's quite likely that the level of despair was making it hard for her to speak [in the phone call].

...

Deb Mmm. I think that's why I feel quite frustrated. (*Yeah.*) (Pause.) Yeah, given that she wrote the letter and did seem to want to have a conversation with me. And if I take it that despair was making it impossible for her to have the conversation with me, it kind of feels like a little bit more leeway for me to continue the conversation via letter; or take up a conversation, or invite further conversation.

...

Jean Those are serious words, aren't they? (Pause.) (*Yeah. Yeah.*) [Jean repeated words of letter.]

...

You know, I'm thinking, I'm sitting with you, asking the question around responsibility, and what you might do, and how active should you be, given the knowledge you have... [Jean goes on to ask for some background detail].

...

So we've got this picture of Despair maybe being the block between her speaking with you as you kind of might have anticipated given what the letter had said and as [...].

...

statute as in North America, and where, as King and Wheeler (1999) found in the UK, there are many versions of how much responsibility supervisors have. When the counsellor is positioned as *letting it be known*, the supervisor is positioned as the professional to whom she is letting it be known. What is the position call to the supervisor, in terms of responsibility, and what are the effects of that call for how the supervision relation is produced? What is the supervisor to do with this knowledge: how was Jean positioned?

Georgina's letter had come to Deb from a *letting it be known* position, too, and now Deb, as counsellor, was feeling stymied: she had knowledge, but felt powerless to act. Was Jean to share in carrying the burden of care in an inactive sort of way or was there some other sort of work to be done in the supervision? This extract will illustrate that there was work to be done in the supervision: responsibility needed to be taken in response to the safety concerns. Was there, then, in the *letting it be known*, and in Deb's expressed feeling of powerlessness in the situation, an invitation to Jean to assume responsibility to adopt a more instrumental mode of supervision than that produced in the collaborative practice-generation in Extract 8.1 in the previous chapter, for example? Certainly the concern was more immediate and serious than the generating possibilities for practice in which Lee and Ruth were engaged as they deconstructed decision making discourse.

There are many ways in which responsibility might be constructed in this practice instance. For example, *letting it be known* might work a little like confession – that in *letting it be known* the counsellor is absolved of responsibility, as responsibility is passed to the supervisor, positioned as wiser, older, more responsible. Or there might be, in the pre-existing position for the counsellor as the *supervisee,* as the less responsible of the partnership, as constrained by their occupation of a more protected position, a sense that counsellor responsibility ends with letting it be known. Behind this presentation, informed by dominant ideas about supervisor responsibility, sit both these possibilities. However, while these possibilities cannot but hover in the background of this conversation, the example will show how responsibility came to be produced on dialogic terms as Deb and Jean searched for ways forward in response to Deb's presentation of concern.

You know, I'm really sitting with this, you're saying you have brought this to supervision, to suss out your responsibility [brief interchange edited out]. And that's sitting quite heavily with me, this sense of your responsibility for this young woman who [goes on to describe the situation].

...

Jean Yeah, I hear that quite seriously. And the question that comes up for me is, you know, is this one of those odd, occasional times when you might [describes possible action]. I don't know what your thoughts are about that.

Jean's response to Deb's presentation came from a position of seeking understanding. Jean began by summarising Deb's concern, centring both the critical client situation and Deb's response to it in her speaking:

> So you're talking about feeling powerless because she's [Georgina] saying, "No [to coming to counselling]", but you've had a letter [from her] that spoke of real desperation?

I read Jean's response as offering Deb an active and purposive position to take up, initially as the person with the particular information to offer that would make an assessment possible. Jean would collaborate with Deb in that assessment, assuming Deb's competence and the value of her authority. Deb went on to amplify the detail of the desperation expressed in Georgina's letter.

In this analysis I am using Jean's words and summarising Deb's, not to privilege the supervisor's work over the counsellor's in my re-telling but mindful of the protection of the privacy of Deb's client. For that reason, too, I am not making visible the content of the letter.

Jean's response to Deb's amplification emphasised Deb's work in making an assessment, and Deb's knowledge of her client. Standing aside from other assumptions, Jean wanted to know for now what meaning Deb had made of the letter on the basis of her knowledge of Georgina:

> And knowing Georgina, you made some kind of judgements about the meaning of that letter, given the history of (your earlier work together)?

Deb's response to Jean was to give a little more detail of the letter, to which Jean replied, *Those are serious words, aren't they?* In the commentary position, she was lending her weight to Deb's concern, treating the serious words with seriousness. In this version of the commentary position, Jean was bearing witness to the gravity of the situation, in this way exercising responsibility in the meaning making that

would be critical to an effective assessment. In the space of the supervision conversation, Georgina's words were dialogised, the seriousness of their possible meanings investigated.

After a pause and agreement from Deb, Jean repeated the words of the letter. I suggest that Jean was making space at the centre not only for Deb's knowledge, but also for the knowledge that was available from Georgina herself (in the letter) in this shared assessment of Deb's responsibility to take action. Jean continued,

> And you talked about "it [some aspects of the letter] could be 'teenage stuff' that blows over, but knowing Georgina". Can you say some more about that?

An exploration of Deb's experience of 'teenage stuff' in her own family and her knowledge of the realities of Georgina's life followed, with Jean summing up again with an emphasis on Deb's position as a counsellor with knowledge, positioned as a significant knowledge resource to the shared assessment:

> So there are things that you know about Georgina that suggest to you that where, in some ways with [your daughter] you might take these things with a grain of salt, knowing that she'll ride these…

The careful gathering of an assessment account continued. The inquiry with which Jean structured Deb's exploration and assessment offered Deb the tools with which to exercise agency in relation to her concerns for Georgina and in relation with her sense of professional responsibility. Selected below are inquiries that demonstrate the gathering of assessment information where local knowledge, Deb's knowing about her particular client in the context of her practice, was highlighted. Again, this is a strategy drawn directly from narrative counselling practice. In subversion of the dominant privileging of expert knowledge, indigenous knowledge is sought and storied. In navigating toward a common point in making an assessment, Jean had not taken over the helm, but stood at the wheel with Deb, consulting her knowledge of the seascape and of particular landmarks.

> And what effect [do you think that would have had], knowing what you do of Georgina?
>
> What would you make of the silences?
>
> So, now, what are you making of the silences?

However, although Deb's knowledge as a resource was highlighted by this inquiry, Deb herself was not under the spotlight of surveillance for her practice. In response to this last inquiry, Deb, struggling to make meaning of the silences about which Jean had asked her, responded,

> I don't know. I just don't know. I don't know how to read it. I don't know if it's because of not feeling supported, or heard, or <u>safe</u> with me, or not really wanting to take counselling up for that reason, not knowing who else to call to, and, or whether it's something else entirely. I don't know. (Mmm) I feel like there's not a lot that I can know about that.

In searching amongst possible explanations, Deb named most readily those that centred on some deficiency in the counselling relationship: *not feeling supported, or heard, or safe with me.* The problem-with-the-counselling-relationship account was offering Deb a reading, but she was not satisfied with what that reading offered her as an explanation: *I don't feel there's a lot I can know.* Jean at this point joined Deb in a different way in meaning production, offering for Deb's consideration another possible interpretation. Alongside the counselling-relation interpretation Deb had just produced, Jean offered an interpretation focussed on *Georgina's positioning* in relation with the problem with which she was struggling.

> Yeah. The one, you know, one of the wonderings I've got is that, how much it was the problem that she wrote to you about, the despair and isolation and desperation, (*yeah, right*) that was keeping her quiet [when you phoned]. Do you think it (*Yeah.*)? (Pause)

This interpretation was offered for Deb's consideration: it was a wondering, made available to the dialogue, not an explanation to close down inquiry. Jean's interpretation came, I suggest, out of a store of professional knowledge that sat quietly alongside the inquiry that had come before. The position from which she spoke now, however, still did not offer privilege to that professional knowledge, but made it available to the dialogue, to be considered as a possibility.

Jean then continued, offering an interpretation from a version of the *commentary position*. Here the supervisor takes up the commentary in witness to what they know of the counsellor's practice. In this position the supervisor takes up their authority, to stand alongside an account which they have previously witnessed, but that is somehow threatened in the current circumstances. In counselling this tactic could be described as counsellors using our authority to "put our weight behind" a client's preferences for the exercise of agency in their own life [Winslade, Crocket & Monk, 1997, p.63]. In the commentary position the supervisor is putting their weight behind the counsellor's practice preferences, or behind a particular account of the counsellor's practice that is not visible or that is undermined in some way in the present account. In this position, the supervisor is not called into persuasion of the counsellor, but rather offers witness to knowledge that would otherwise not be spoken. That knowledge was offered here tentatively, for consideration:

> That a young woman (*yeah*) with whom you previously had a thriving (*yeah*) relationship (*yeah*)...

Deb took up and tested out Jean's offered interpretation.

> But not being able to speak, and not even to be able to say anything is very familiar for her. Yeah. Yeah, I think it's quite likely that the level of despair was making it hard for her to speak [in the phone call].

I notice that Deb was also tentative about this possible account: *I think it's quite likely*. The account was being made up, by Deb and Jean, on the best evidence available. Both Jean and Deb were tentative, exercising reflexivity as they

knowingly making up an account. Neither Jean nor Deb was taking on an authoritative position in relation with Georgina: they were producing an account that would serve to produce a best possible assessment of the safety concerns, when certainty was not possible. I make this interpretation that they were producing a best possible assessment, because the assessment was drawing on and putting together both general professional knowledge they both had and Deb's particular knowledge of the situation storied in dialogue with general professional knowledge. The focus on inquiry led to both a wide and a detailed assessment.

Jean and Deb continued to co-labour over the assessment task. Together they researched the aspects of the story about which Deb had particular knowledge. Between those named knowledge points, they were joined in producing possible explanatory routes, Jean now also offering both commentary and inquiry. Deb went on to summarise, continuing the task of consulting her ethical responsibilities. As she did, a repositioning from the *quite powerless to do; I don't know what else I should do* position of which she spoke at the beginning became visible:

> Mmm. I think that's why I feel quite frustrated. (*Yeah.*) (Pause.) Yeah, given that she wrote the letter and did seem to want to have a conversation with me. And if I take it that despair was making it impossible for her to have the conversation with me, it kind of feels like a little bit more leeway for me to continue the conversation via letter; or take up a conversation, or invite further conversation.

Deb was now positioned to experience *a little more leeway* within which she might act to exercise some responsibility in respect of Georgina. Further, she was the agent who had produced that leeway. Jean had persisted in accessing and storying Deb's concerns. Into that account Jean offered other professional knowledge, for Deb's assessment of its value. Throughout, Jean supported Deb in assessment: she joined Deb in speaking of concern and supported her to respond to the seriousness of the situation which has been presented by Deb. Extracted below are examples of the position that Jean took to put at the centre of the conversation the seriousness of the concern Deb had brought.

> Those are serious words, aren't they? (Pause.) (*Yeah. Yeah.*) [Jean repeated words of letter.]

Jean paid careful attention to both Georgina's speaking, as expressed in the letter, and to Deb's. Jean was taking a position of review, inviting Deb to do that, too. The emphasis was on positioning themselves well to make an assessment of the concerns:

> You know, I'm thinking, I'm sitting with you, asking the question around responsibility, and what you might do, and how active should you be, given the knowledge you have… [Jean goes on to ask for some background detail].
>
> So we've got this picture of Despair maybe being the block between her speaking with you as you kind of might have anticipated given what the letter had said and as […].
> […]
> You know, I'm really sitting with this, you're saying you have brought this to supervision, to suss out your responsibility [brief interchange edited out]. And that's sitting quite heavily with me, this sense of your responsibility for this young woman who [goes on to describe the situation].
> […]
> Yeah, I hear that quite seriously. And the question that comes up for me is, you know, is this one of those odd, occasional times when you might [describes possible action]. I don't know what your thoughts are about that.

Again, Jean offered a suggestion for Deb's assessment: the assessment continued to be negotiated. During the Phase Four reflection on the process of this work, Jean commented that she gets *most directive as a supervisor* when safety is a concern. However, I suggest that this example demonstrates putting to work both particular, local knowledge and professional wisdom, in ways that produced Deb as agentive in her responsibility towards Georgina and her safety. At the completion of the supervision, Deb left planning to take action in respect of Georgina and her safety, having authorised her actions in dialogic community by consulting particular

and general knowledge. The assessment had been collaborative, counsellor knowledge and supervisor knowledge together speaking client safety and respectful practice into the centre of the assessment space.

Deb had begun the supervision uncertain that action was possible in respect of Georgina. It seemed that perhaps *letting it be known* would fulfil her responsibility. Together, Deb and Jean researched what was known, so the story of what was known about Deb's concern for Georgina was as rich as possible. At the same time, both Deb and Jean were calling on professional cultural stories that helped to build the account, and position them well for assessment. Paré suggested that "the wholehearted privileging of the 'local' restricts persons' access to a range of other potentially helpful input" (1999, p.7) in therapy. I understand him to be saying that postmodern therapies are not about discarding professional knowledge. Rather they are about situating that knowledge and also paying attention to local and alternative knowledges, recognising the history of their exclusion. Jean's researching of what Deb knew depended not only upon the local. Jean herself was calling on and offering professional knowledge about safety. She called on this knowledge as she sought a rich account in her researching and as she offered possible interpretations. However, the researching and the offering were done in ways that recognised dialogic speaking rights – *so these are things that you know; I hear that quite seriously.* It was in dialogical relation that the supervisory process was navigated and responsibility taken. Responsibility was constructed as relational responsibility: it was exercised in the space between counsellor and supervisor in their shared actions, and would go on to be exercised by them both. The counsellor now had some means to position herself well to take responsibility: she had authorised herself to take action. A relational responsibility produced in dialogue provided assessment that was ethical and effective, in working both for immediate client safety and for producing therapist agency in continuing to work for safety.

This example, too, stands in sharp contrast with the example from Holloway (1995, pp.101-2) that I discussed in Chapter Three. The Holloway scenario was not comparable vis-à-vis safety, but it provides a strongly contrasting supervisor positioning. There, the supervisor immediately assumed that she knew what the

problem was with little researching of the particulars of the situation. The supervisor and the knowledge she brought to the situation were privileged. While Holloway's claim was that the location of the counselling setting was informing the supervision, the *local,* of postmodern therapy's interest, was not investigated. Speed of advice-giving and supervisor certainty about supervisor knowledge in the Holloway example contrast, in this example, with the measured gathering of the story of the counsellor's concern, and the careful reviewing of the *local* data that had produced Deb's concern. Counsellor concern was privileged; it was at the centre of the supervision and its story carefully elaborated. The supervisor was present to the elaboration of the concern, her professional knowledge offered at one point as possible interpretation, for the consideration of the counsellor, who might respond in a number of ways. While there was an absence of certainty in the assessment, there was a great deal of care. Responsibility was produced dialogically, not as the production of the individual supervisor as in the Holloway example. The supervision produced counsellor authority for action, the dialogue having built an account that made sense of practice. Meaning making, in dialogic relation, for responsible relation and responsible action was at the centre of the supervision space.

Deconstructing supervision: the politics of practice

From the centring of the inquiry on the nuances of the counsellor's knowledge in an assessment of safety concerns, I move on now to illustrate the work of a counsellor and supervisor, where the inquiry brought to the centre the politics of the supervision practice. In Chapter Two I drew attention to Rose's (1998) concern that an emphasis on discourse in terms of the communicative aspects of language might mean that too little attention would be paid to discourse as acts of governance. This next example delights me for the ways in which it brings to the centre and the surface of the supervision the production of supervision as both an act of professional governance, and as a site for assembling the professional self as responsible. In this way the example shows a supervisor paying attention to a particular version of the question that I took from Rose's work, *what sort of selves are we assembling ourselves as in supervision*?

Extract 9.2. Deconstructing supervision: Practices of the self?

Tania is the counsellor and Adele is the supervisor; this extract is from Supervision 12.

Tania And what I've decided to bring up is, how I feel really concerned about my low client numbers at [indicates agency context]. Though that fluctuates, it hasn't built up into either what I think it should have built up to, or what I think other people think it should have built into.

Adele So, who's "other people"?

Tania Well, the funders. Not that I've had any queries from funders or the [agency directorate]. So there's feeling like, oh, I'm the person who must be responsible for that. And the other bit [of the problem], for me, is feeling like, "If you're a good counsellor then you get busy, you get busy". And I'm not [busy]. And although it's not continuously at a point where I worry about it, it is there fairly constantly."

Adele Do you mind if I ask you for a bit more background?

...

Adele So basically you're "it"?

Tania Yeah, I'm it. So I do feel like if anything is not all right, then it's me [who is responsible]. I'm not... Yeah, I am *it*, and that's how I feel. And I think that part of the problem, if it is a problem, is well, I think of what else I should be doing, or what I should have done. Apart from that, if you're a good counsellor then people just find their way and beat a path to your door. I don't know if that's true or not, but it's an idea I've got. And the other thing is, I suppose I should have done more, but I'm not quite sure of what the more is.

Adele So what's the [agency directorate] role? Is it a [] or a [] or a [], how does it work?

...

Extract 9.2. Deconstructing supervision: Practices of the self?

Tania is the counsellor and Adele is the supervisor; this extract is from Supervision 12.

Beginning by saying that she had given considerable thought to what she would bring to this supervision session, Tania continued:

> And what I've decided to bring up is how I feel really concerned about my low client numbers at [indicates agency context]. Though that fluctuates, it hasn't built up into either what I think it should have built up to, or what I think other people think it should have built into.

Adele's first inquiry attended to the socio-political, to how the gaze, to which Tania was subject, was constituted. The centre of her inquiry was the site of practice, and how a position was being produced for Tania to take up as she told this supervision story:

> So, who's "other people"?

Tania's response made more visible how the problematic of her supervision interest was constituted. It drew attention to the self-surveillance that was at work. In clarifying the ways in which the gaze was or was not personified, Tania's response made a little more visible the dominant professional discourses of autonomy and responsibility.

> Well, the funders. Not that I've had any queries from funders or the [agency directorate]. So there's feeling like, oh, I'm the person who must be responsible for that. And the other bit [of the problem], for me, is feeling like, "If you're a good counsellor then you get busy, you get busy". And I'm not [busy]. And although it's not continuously at a point where I worry about it, it is there fairly constantly."

At work here was a *good-counsellors (have-lots-of-clients)* discourse that provided a technology by which a counsellor could act upon herself, by which she could measure

Adele So what is their role, or job description, or what tasks ...?

...

Adele Do they offer any support?

...

Adele So a lot of your work is also in supporting the [employing agency group]. Giving them information...

Tania I haven't seen it like that, so far, supporting them. Well I suppose I've actually seen my role as justifying myself to the [employing agency]; that's one of the things I think I've been doing is justifying myself to the [employing agency], rather than recruiting them ...

Adele What expectations do you have of the [employing agency], and how they will support you?

...

Tania Yeah, looking at it, I'm really interested in thinking some more about how I can, maybe, use the [agency directorate] for a way that; changing my relationship with the [agency directorate]. And I hadn't realised before that I was putting myself in a justifying position, which is easy [to do]; I can think how easy that is to happen. But I am interested in ways of maybe of changing that, and ways of maybe using, maybe particularly Barbara [member of agency directorate]; inviting her onboard more, and get other people alongside too.

herself and find herself wanting. Tania was positioned in both a social and public accountability in which she was in relation with others (employers and funders, and the profession), and also an internalised accountability produced by the self-scrutiny of professional practice. The counsellor might be thought of as a subject assembled for confession – for having failed to measure up to the *good counsellor* criteria – and for examination – how deserving is she of the funding - and then for treatment/putting right.

Accountability discourse might have offered the supervisor an invitation to engage in a range of problem-solving moves, exploring with Tania possible practical actions that she could take to recruit clients. Such moves could well have worked to reinforce the positioning of Tania as a counsellor in deficit, while apparently working to position her more favourably as a *good counsellor*.

However, Adele's reply suggested a reflexive posture towards Professional Counsellor discourse. I suspect that she had heard the discourses of Professional Autonomy and Responsibility being reproduced in Tania's speaking, and was alert to the positions they were offering Tania here. It appears that she was alert, too, to the positions offered her as supervisor, and the effect on the counsellor-supervisor relation. Positioning herself a researcher-supervisor, Adele appears to have been asking herself, "What other stories are at work here? What else do we both need to understand? What tools do we have to make meaning of this concern?" She went on to ask,

> Do you mind if I ask you for a bit more background?

Adele continued to ask about the setting and about the relationship between the Tania and the employing agency. (Again, to protect confidentiality, I do not offer detail here.) As Tania described her work setting further, Adele responded,

> So basically you're "it"?

This is another production from the commentary position. In this version, Adele as supervisor was offering witness to the account that she had just heard. She summonsed her supervisory authority to name the vignette, the story, she had heard. Her response is resonant in the story it tells. In this brief account, *you're it*, and the questions that preceded it, she was opening space for the problem to be described differently. The effect of a problem differently described was to bring attention to Tania's positioning within a discourse of *sole responsibility*. The different description also brought attention to the ways the pathologising self-gaze (Bird, 2000) had been working to produce a deficit positioning within a *good counsellor/good employee* discourse.

An effect of the different description was that space was opened for making meaning differently. Tania responded:

> Yeah, I'm it. So I do feel like if anything is not all right, then it's me [who is responsible]. I'm not... Yeah, I am *it*, and that's how I feel. And I think that part of the problem, if it is a problem, is well, I think of what else I should be doing, or what I should have done. Apart from that, if you're a good counsellor then people just find their way and beat a path to your door. I don't know if that's true or not, but it's an idea I've got. And the other thing is, I suppose I should have done more, but I'm not quite sure of what the more is.

In her response Tania repeated, three times, the *I am it* description. The pausing, emphasis and intonation of Tania's spoken words indicated, I think, both reflection and the resonance of "experience-near" (White, 1989) description: the *I am it* description made sense of the difficulties she had been experiencing. Some destabilising of the problem was occurring: Tania now used the phrase *if it is a problem*. Tania noticed, too, that the *good counsellors* discourse might have its authority unsettled: the *lots of clients* story was an idea that may or may not be true.

Amongst the many position calls to a supervisor at this point, Adele made what I suggest was a selection based on matters of justice. She elected to stay inquiring about the *I am it* description. Her inquiry brought to the centre of the conversation the present-absence in the *I am it* description: if you are *it*, where are others? If you are at the centre of the attention of the gaze, who is at the margins? With whom are you in relation? Adele's inquiry was now clearly located in a discourse of employer-employee relationship:

> So what's the [agency directorate] role? Is it a [...] or a [...] or a [...], how does it work?

Adele continued to turn the inquiry outward. This turning was not about finding fault in others, but about drawing attention to the discursive production of the problem. Her stance suggests that to describe and understand the problem of *low client numbers*, we need to understand the discursive field in which that phrase is made to make sense. Adele and the team already had heard that Tania was feeling badly, that she was subject to concerns that she was not a good enough counsellor because clients were not beating their way to her door. However, as Adele inquired further about the relationship between Tania and her work place we learned more about that which Tania was feeling badly in relation with.

Adele's next move, in employing irony in her suggestion that an employing agency have a job description, offered a shift in the power relation between Tania and the agency.

> So what is their role, or job description, or what tasks ...?

Usually it is employees who have job descriptions that make it clear what their responsibilities are: could it be that an employer has reciprocal responsibilities, the ironic inquiry asked. The inquiry offered reconsideration of the *I am it* position, for it brought others in from the margins. In this way space began to open for alternative possibilities as Tania worked to position herself well as a professional in her workplace. We had heard earlier that the discourses of Counsellor

Responsibility and Autonomy were active in describing the problem. Through this inquiry the supervisor now introduced an alternative discourse of Employer Responsibility, invoking other possible versions of employer-employee relationship.

The hesitation of Tania's reply indicated the shift in position she had been offered by the new conversational centre. As she reviewed the employing body's role/job description/tasks, she struggled to come up with very much substance: such considerations might not be particularly visible in dominant versions of employment discourse. Adele's next inquiry identified a role absent from that which Tania had named. She named a relational quality, *support*.

> Do they offer any support?

It seems to me that Adele was taking a purposeful position in an employment relations discourse. Deconstructing employment relations discourse, she was using her authority to enlarge the possibilities for what might occupy the conversational space, thus making other locations within the text available. Her inquiry opened dialogic space to consider the positioning of employer and employee in relation, and situated her as advocating for employ*er* responsibility towards an employee. Tania went on to explain the work she did to involve the agency directorate, and Adele responded,

> So a lot of your work is also in supporting the [employing agency group]. Giving them information…

Adele's response might be read as a simple reflection. But I argue that it was more than that, that the subtlety and nuance of her response also contained a (somewhat ironic) commentary from a position that rendered strange the familiar positioning in employment relations discourse which Tania occupied. This commentary, the naming of the positioning-in-relation from which Tania *supported* her employer, began to unsettle that position, with the effect that the possibility was produced that other positions might become available to Tania.

> I haven't seen it like that, so far, supporting them. Well I suppose I've actually seen my role as justifying myself to the [employing agency]; that's one of the things I think I've been doing is justifying myself to the [employing agency], rather than recruiting them …

The supervisor's inquiry about the employing agency and the counsellor's relationship with the agency offered a speaking space for Tania to turn up an aspect of this relationship previously invisible and unspoken, so taken for granted was it within employment relations discourse. Tania had been constrained by her positioning, a pre-existing position (Willig, 1999b, p.114) in that discourse that had constrained her professional acting. Intersecting with the *Good counsellor* discourse was a *Good employee* discourse: a good employee produces herself as an autonomous worker meeting all her responsibilities to her employer with little need of support from her employer. However, Tania read the subtlety and nuance of Adele's question, hearing the disruption of the production of *responsibility* and *support*. A different employment relations discourse had been produced, one that constructed responsibility and support as more than unidirectional: that discourse spoke not just of *good employees* but also of *good employers* and invoked responsibility as relational. Repositioning herself as she spoke, Tania now gave an account that said that within an employment relations discourse she had been called to present herself for examination, positioned as a *justifying-to* subject, constrained by her relation with the employing body. She was at once an autonomous subject, who must be self-responsible, *and* the calculating subject (Miller, 1992, p.61), who must engage in the calculating practice of providing information about her work to others to whom she was accountable. As she had with the *I am it* description earlier, Tania repeated this idea that had been produced anew in the dialogue: *justifying myself*.

As she went on to name the possibility of *recruiting* the employing body to her interests, Tania was now taking up an "active and purposive" (Willig, 1999b, p.114) subject position. Again language was used subversively to produce a different power relation: it is usually employers who *recruit* staff, not employees who recruit

employers into good employer positions. In dialogue a new position was made possible: rather than being in justifying relation, Tania might be in recruiting relation with her employer, recruiting support for the purposes for which employer and employee were in relation. Both wanted an effective counselling service for their community: what kinds of employment relations discourse might support that intent?

Adele's supervision work through this example, in locating the problem in discourse, and bringing to the centre of the conversation, in gentle, one-step-at-a-time inquiry, both pre-existing positions and the tools with which other possible positions could be generated, might be described in Andersen's terms as "appropriately unusual" (1991). The distinctions Adele's language offered were subtle: her speaking both met and disturbed the terms Tania had been speaking in, highlighting locations both at the centre and at the margins of the text. For Tania the subtlety of the distinctions Adele was drawing made sense and helped her generate new terms for describing her location: aspects of her location that were previously shrouded in the mist of dominant employment relations discourse were made readable and negotiable. She might now locate herself differently.

In response to the position Tania had now taken up, Adele continued with inquiry that continued to refuse the call of a professional discourse that would position the counsellor as the object of further surveillance. She refused, too, the call of an employment relations discourse that constructed a relation of unilateral support, employee to employer. Rather, Adele's speaking highlighted other locations in the text of professional discourse and employment relations discourse. With other positions available for her selection, Tania could be "active and purposive" (Willig, 1999b) in the position she took up. There was a position in which Tania could name her expectations, *expectations <u>you</u> have*, of what would constitute support by the employer for her:

> What expectations do you have of the [employing agency], and how they will support you?

These kinds of conversational moves, the ironicising suggestions that an employer have a job description, exercise a responsibility to support staff, and be subject to employee expectations, continued to disrupt the familiar and to make available alternative positionings that Tania might take up. By these moves the conversation opened space for the negotiation of how the matter of low client numbers might be understood, and for wide consideration of Tania's preferences in negotiating the position she took up in regard to the dilemma she had brought to supervision. The dilemma was located in discursive practices constituted within professional and employment discourse. However, within these relocations the conversation did not in any way dispense with counsellor responsibility in the situation; rather, it produced responsibility differently. In the opening up of ways of thinking that contested total autonomous responsibility for the counsellor, and that contested an understanding of the counsellor herself as inadequate, the conversation offered Tania more room to negotiate how she might respond responsibly to a discursively produced dilemma.

Tania Yeah, looking at it, I'm really interested in thinking some more about how I can, maybe, use the [agency directorate] for a way that; changing my relationship with the [agency directorate]. And I hadn't realised before that I was putting myself in a justifying position, which is easy [to do]; I can think how easy that is to happen. But I am interested in ways of maybe of changing that, and ways of maybe using, maybe particularly Barbara [member of agency directorate]; inviting her onboard more, and get other people alongside too.

Selecting amongst calls to responsibility

During the Phase Four reflection at the end of this supervision, Adele remarked about the position calls that were available to her as supervisor. She noticed calls within a discourse of supervision as instrumental problem-solving, a discourse that positions the supervisor as having the answers to problems of procedure.

> [I was noticing] how easy it is to get drawn into responsibility. Responsibility for a supervisor to come up with something. I wanted to try

> to resist being drawn into the same thing [as the counsellor: responsibility, as supervisor, to come up with something].

I asked Adele what she had seen herself doing to resist the positioning of *responsible to come up with something*. How had she refused the call that could have seemed to indicate a straightforward way ahead?

> I think, checking out what the effects were, and how you, Tania, were feeling about what was said, and about the process. About resisting the idea of coming up with solutions, which I thought then might add to the oppression of the problem [for Tania], rather than be helpful.
>
> I worked just to make things visible, what the issues were, without having a sense of finding solutions.

We hear here how Adele was actively theorising her work, producing a relational supervision practice, that took care to notice discursive practices at work in the many sites that were represented in this example. She was noticing the call to her as supervisor: *come up with something*; that is, with a solution to the *not enough clients* problem presented by Tania. As *good counsellors* have *lots of clients*, so might *good supervisors* always *come up with something*. Producing this call to *come up with something* was the construction of supervision as a problem solving practice, one that sees problems as immediate, and relies on supervisors to have practice knowledge and answers to offer. Adele noticed the relation set up between her and Tania in this discourse: coming up with *solutions* might *add to the oppression of the problem.*

Rather, Adele saw her task as working to *make things visible*: what is here in the discursive vista, she was asking, positioned alongside Tania. To *make things visible* in the ways Adele did was to attend to the politics of both supervision practices and counselling practices. It was to ask what practices of the self were being produced in supervision. Was supervision to come up with answers to the *low client numbers* problem and add to the struggle for Tania, for example? It

was to ask, too, what practices of the professional self were producing the problems a counsellor brought to supervision. In asking this question, Adele made visible the discursive positioning offered Tania by the version of employment relations that had been at work in Tania's situation. And by asking questions that did not take for granted taken-for-granted practices within this discursive regime, she opened space for Tania to speak to some aspects of the problematic positioning she had been experiencing, and to produce possibilities for things to be otherwise. Tania could, perhaps, become a recruiter of others into shared responsibility, rather than being positioned as solely responsible and therefore as justifying.

My purpose here is to focus on the deliberateness the supervisor brought to the position she took up in relation with the counsellor. Her inquiry worked to provide an alternative account of the problem, one that did not join the counsellor in a pathologising of her professional self. Rather, the supervisor focussed inquiry on the situation of the problem, and thence on the local socio-political practices that she understood to have produced the problem: under what discursive conditions was the problem flourishing? In this way Adele joined Tania in constructing a new way of relating to the problem, one that offered Tania more possibilities for her relationship with her professional self and so for responsible professional action. Responsibility became produced differently for both Adele and Tania.

Discourses work through us: without thinking through the positionings offered supervisor and counsellor in relation we can as supervisors end up reproducing in the supervision the positioning of the counsellor that was already producing a concern for them. (There are echoes of ideas about parallel process [Doehrman, 1976] that have gained considerable ascendancy in many supervision practice circles in this country, and in the U.K. [McConkey, 1999]. I note the presence of these echoes. However, the notion of parallel process depends on different theoretical resources than the constructionist ones that have shaped this project. Given the local ascendancy of these ideas I acknowledge the echo, but I do not wish to be diverted from the account I am constructing, for this account does not depend upon the psychodynamic notion of parallel process.) All texts generate

other texts. The texts of a professional responsibility discourse respond to and arise out of previous texts. In taking a metadiscursive orientation, Adele made visible the ways in which supervision discourse was being produced and reproduced, and thus made visible the relation of power in which supervisor and counsellor were positioned in supervision.

Supervision: assembling our professional selves

As I draw my analysis of this example to a close, I return to the question that I used in the introduction to this section. What sort of selves are we assembling ourselves as in supervision? What sort of practice of the self is supervision? The version of supervision discourse that has been produced here is one that has refused to construct the counsellor as *it*, as the isolated originator of their practice. It has refused to work upon the self of the counsellor as though the self of the counsellor could act independently of discourses of employment relations, or professionalism and autonomy and responsibility. Rose's (1998) words resonate as I struggle to find the words to describe what sort of supervision practice this is that has been produced here, for the words I have used thus far say most clearly what the practice is not, what the practice has refused to do. Ending his collection of essays that explored the modes of subjectification the psy complex has made available, Rose suggested that since there has been some destabilising of the "once secure space of interiority",

> ...we might at least enhance the contestability of the forms of being that have been invented for us, and begin to invent ourselves differently. (Rose, 1998, p.197)

I argue that this was the kind of activity that we have seen going on here, the contesting of forms of being, and the beginnings of inventing alternative forms of being. To make such a grand claim about such small acts is also to enter the realm of contestability. However, if I am to take seriously the (poststructuralist) claims that persons are assembled in modes of being and that we do make our selves up according to the modes of being that are made available to us – and I do want to take these claims seriously – this supervision conversation can be understood not as banal, but as contributing at a particular and local level to

contesting the modes of relating to the professional self that dominant supervision discourse has offered. For example, the supervision produced here has contested, to some extent, the rightness and the naturalness of autonomy and individual responsibility in professional practice, by making visible their isolating effects.

The supervision conversation from which this example was extracted has offered a mode of relating to the professional self that understands the professional self as produced in relation. Responsibility, too, is a matter of relationship, multidirectional rather than unidirectional. I argued in Chapter Four that, in the context of professional counselling, supervision is one of what Rose calls "the diverse machines of morality" that assemble us as "responsible subjects" (1998, p.182). Reconceiving responsibility as relational and multidirectional, and as discursively rather than individually produced, as the supervision conversation in this Extract 9.2 did, we begin to contest the forms of being offered to us if we understand supervision as examination and confession.

A deconstructing supervision produces a different version of supervisor responsibility than those versions of supervision that reproduce practices of paternalism and instrumentality. A deconstructing supervision is what was being produced here in Extract 9.2, a version of supervision that not only addressed power but that took power to be an inevitable interdiscursive presence: discourse always produces power relations. As supervisors and counsellors we are always caught up in negotiating complex webs of meaning through which power, justice and ethics interweave. I suggest that Extract 9.2 illustrates how the challenging work of negotiating our ways through complex webs of meaning depends upon supervisors positioning themselves well to pay attention, through inquiry, to the productivity of power. What are the power relations at work here? Within the terms of what discursive practices are these power relations being played out? These are the questions that inform this supervision work.

Locating practice within a moral order

The last example from practice showed the supervisor positioning herself to pay attention to the forms of professional being available to be taken up and to the power relations of practice. But to position ourselves well to do this is a complex

matter, and we will not always manage as well as we might wish. "The narrative therapist may not find it easy living up to the high ideals of the paradigm," suggested Morss and Nichterlein (1999, p.165). Such "high ideals" can subject us to self doubt, as Morss and Nichterlein suggested, or they may silence us when we struggle to find ways to meet the standards of speaking we set ourselves. Counsellors might use supervision to support us to produce our practices in ways that are consistent with the "high ideals" to which we ascribe. Supervision is a site where we work to assemble ourselves as moral subjects. How, then, without the confessional of dominant supervision regimes, do we encounter our struggles to position ourselves well as moral and ethical practitioners? This next example shows, in a very brief sequence, counsellor and supervisor deliberately taking positions, in supervision, to support practice preferences.

Extract 9.3: Positions for ethical action

Margaret is the counsellor and Louisa the supervisor in Supervision 14.
Margaret and Louisa were reviewing a situation with clients that had been troubling Margaret. Margaret sought to understand a complex situation that had developed in her counselling work with a couple. At one point, noticing Margaret pausing and hesitating, Louisa asked her:

> What's puzzling?

In a self-commentary position, Margaret replied:

> Oh, just, it's so easy to invite some of the old words in, like "manipulation".

Margaret was noticing the call from both lay and professional discourse to diagnose the problem as *manipulation* and thus to invoke a pejorative description of client behaviour. The complex problem could be made sense of if she employed the notion of manipulation. But manipulation was an *old word*, a description employed in a moral order in which she did not want to position herself. The call to take up a position that described the problem as manipulation left Margaret struggling to speak: that description, *manipulation*, did not invoke the respectful relation that she wanted to maintain with her clients. Margaret had noticed the call to her to speak of

manipulation, and taking a metadiscursive position, she both acknowledged that call and refused it. However, in her refusing she had been without words.

In response, Louisa acknowledged Margaret's preference to speak in respectful ways about clients. She went on to ask Margaret's permission for the conversation to proceed using the familiar terms, *these old words,* but bracketing the speaking that used the word *manipulation* as an aside. The notion of manipulation could be used, spoken wittingly in order to generate alternative terms. To speak with *those old words* was only a provisional tactic, to support the making up of other accounts, not a final account in itself:

> ... maybe together we can look at how else we can understand these familiar words like 'manipulation'.

Without the word, *manipulation,* that offered a particular, though not a preferred, understanding of the problem with which Margaret was grappling, it was difficult to find a way forward. By taking *manipulation* as a word "under erasure" (Davies, 1999, p.139), Margaret and Louisa could work together to produce alternative possible understandings of the positioning of Margaret's clients.

"High ideals" do not necessarily invoke the reproduction of supervision as a place of examination or confession, as this instance of practice has illustrated. While the expression, high ideals, is itself ripe for deconstruction, my emphasis here is on the ways in which counsellor and supervisor observed and responded to position calls, negotiating their ways forward through naming that which was in need of deconstruction. Deconstruction is ongoing. "High ideals" are not static arrangements, but are negotiated in the everyday dialogue of our practice, negotiated in language that might show our struggles to position ourselves well for ethical practice. Moral action is not an essential quality, but one for which we actively work as we take responsibility for the discursive locations of our practices.

The work of this chapter

With three examples from practice this chapter has illustrated the collaborative exercise of responsibility in supervision. Through the exercise of collaborative

responsibility in supervision, counsellors have been positioned well to re-engage with the responsibilities of counselling practice. Inquiry rather than ready assumption has been the strategy illustrated in these examples.

Chapter Ten

Constructing a constructionist supervision: Reflecting team practice

Introduction

Moving from the general focus on constructionist supervision of the previous two chapters, this chapter has as its emphasis the extension of those practices into reflecting team supervision as a particular expression of constructionist work. As a reflecting team we provided for ourselves a professional community of concern (Madigan & Epston, 1995), offering a relational, dialogic and multivocal space structured to be sustaining and generative for each of us and of our practices. The previous chapters have already drawn, for their examples, on the Phase One dyadic counsellor-supervision conversation and the Phase Four team review of and commentary on the processes of the supervision. Therefore, Phases Two and Three provide the emphasis of the examples in this chapter. Chapters Two and Five included an outline of a general reflecting team structure, on which the account I build here depends. The chapter explores examples of joining practices by which the team produced itself as a particular professional community of shared concern. I then go on to show the team working as a community of concern in deconstructing, multi-voiced dialogues about the politics of our practices. The work of team members, in dialogue, consulting each other about professional discourse and the epistemological and ethical positioning of their work provided a resourceful professional community for enriching the storying and thus the ongoing production of our professional lives and practices. The chapter thus continues the development of an account of supervision that draws on the ethos and practices of narrative therapy for the work of supervision.

A professional community of concern

Team members frequently spoke of the support they experienced in the regular meetings of the group and through the group's work together, support that Anne suggested was for her a significant counter to the *isolation* of counselling. Clare spoke of the reflecting team supervision as *luxury*, indicating that the commitment of

time that we had all made was considerable, and was not something that was possible for all counsellors, or in all circumstances. As well, she was indicating *luxury* in having the voices of a number of colleagues reflecting together in supervision. Kate, in similar vein, suggested that *regular supervision* (dyadic) might now seem *impoverished* without the richness of many contributions.

Professional community as resource

In producing supervision as a communal activity in a communal space, the work of the team disrupted the familiar metaphor of privacy in the practice of dyadic counselling supervision. The disruption of privacy had two effects. Clare spoke, in the first supervision meeting, of the worry and unfamiliarity of working live before a number of her peers. However, alongside the possibility that her work could thus be open to judgement was the paradox of her preference to be transparent in her practice, by bringing her work into a setting where it would be seen by her peers. Clare also spoke strongly of valuing the professional development opportunities the project would provide. In the Research Meeting One, Kate, responding to Clare, noted that by then working in the group and having our work visible to each other had become normal, and helpful, practice. Our work together was changing the discourse of counselling supervision. Rather than being positioned in a discourse where visibility constituted surveillance, with the effect that we might seek some protection in privacy, we were engaging with the opportunities for professional enrichment that the visibility of community, in a participatory project, offered our professional practice. On these terms resourcefulness could come to be shared, rather than deficiencies policed.

From privacy to community

Our undertaking a move from dyadic supervision to reflecting team work was significant, for there is a strong emphasis in the professional counselling culture in New Zealand on privileging the privacy of the dyadic counselling relationship. While narrative therapies abound with ideas that counter this impetus to privacy, nonetheless the dominant professional discourse that produces counselling as private-and sheltered-from-view has supported a construction of *supervision* as also private-and-sheltered-from-view, despite the authority of a supervision-as-accountability-and-monitoring discourse. Team members spoke of welcoming the appropriate disruption

of supervision privacy and of shelter from peer review. It was welcomed for the number and variety of points of view that the participation of many voices made available to the consultation; for the sense of support on which there was to draw in producing practice; and for the enriching of practice it offered. I suggest, too, that the disruption of privacy here was welcomed because it was a disruption of which we were the authors: each of us had chosen to participate in the group.

Community through structure

Liz suggested that the peer reflecting team structure, with its a purposeful focus on the person nominated, for that session, as the counsellor consulting with the group, offered more than group supervision might. She noted that both supervisor and team members had particular foci, the supervisor focussing, with Liz, on *the development of my work*, and the team focus of *carefully listening*: *their role is just to carefully listen*. Anne, too, spoke about the structure, saying

> The structure seemed to make it much deeper and richer in terms of development. We've kept very much to our stated purpose which has helped it work. We're all really busy, and we've kept on time, and got down to business, and the business has brought the connections [with each other] for me.

The professional work and the sense of support and connection produced each other.

Entering the dialogical space of supervision: Phase One

The examples of practice from the previous two chapters have been drawn from Phase One supervision work, when the counsellor and supervisor were in dialogue while reflecting team members listened and watched behind the one-way screen. The work of the dyadic partners in this phase is in many ways similar to the work of a supervisory dyad beginning to work together. For example, in Extract 8.3 we saw the careful work as Lee and Ruth set out the history and location of Lee's supervision interest in exploring decision making discourse. In Extract 9.2 I showed Adele, as the supervision agenda was introduced, paying careful attention as supervisor to the positions to which she was called in supervision discourse, and refusing the invitation to produce answers, to *come up with something*, lest she add to the problem. At the

same time, the presence of the team listening behind the screen produced differences in the setting out and exploratory work of Phase One. For example, I have shown Anne including the team in her invitation when as counsellor she began supervision saying that she wanted the counsellor and team to *think with* her. As well, supervisors spoke of a sense of being able to let some aspects of the conversation pass, knowing that the team would be likely to pick them up: responsibility for responding was shared.

In the listening position, team members were free to track the conversation in detail, to listen to themes, to explore silently some particular resonance, *to carefully listen*, as Liz said. At times, too, comments in reviewing the session in Phase Four suggested a strong interest in observing the supervisor's practice. Many foci were possible in the privilege of the listening position.

Listening and speaking positions: Phases Two and Three

The dyadic counsellor-supervisor conversation was interrupted at the end of Phase One. Interruption was not a communication strategy that was encouraged when I did my counsellor training. However, the interruption of the dyadic conversation was another example of a *disturbance* of familiar counselling supervision practice. This disturbance of the familiar produced rich possibilities, as the team members moved to position themselves well to offer the counsellor the *thinking with* they had done, party to yet apart from, the to and fro of the Phase One conversation. Reversing positions, counsellor and supervisor moved to the listening position, for now it was the counsellor and supervisor who were part of, while apart from, the conversation. The supervision concern became demonstrably the concern of a community of practitioners as the team took up the conversation, and the counsellor was now positioned to listen, mull over, take notes, take up a position of reverie, free from any burden of immediate response.

My focus in this chapter is on the Phase Two team work, and the responses of counsellors to that work, in Phase Three.

Extract 10.1. Joining a community of concern

Tania is the counsellor, Adele the supervisor, and Mary and Pauline are team members, in Supervision 12.

Mary I feel a bit flat really. I'm really feeling for Tania in that situation. You know, the isolation, and I felt she was quite flat when she was talking about it. I could really feel for her, knowing her passion for her work and...

Pauline

Mary, is there something there that you know about isolation, that that was what you responded to, or is...?

Mary [the effects of the philosophical isolation] on what you keep in, and how you define your work, and what you think about your work, and what you choose to think about.

Phase Three

Tania It was really neat hearing people wondering and caring about that, not wondering and thinking about it by myself. I am really struck by that (difference).

[...]

If I wasn't always trying to work these things out by myself...

Joining, an expression of the community of concern

One of the ways in which the team worked to become a community of resourceful support (rather than surveillance) was in the quality of the joining in the team's Phase Two reflections. The value for the counsellor of having been joined by the team was a recurrent theme in their responses in Phase Three. For example, in Research Meeting Two, Kate spoke to the sense of support she experienced in having *so many people actually concerned and thinking deeply* about what she had brought to supervision. At that meeting Liz spoke of team members placing *ourselves alongside both other people [counsellor and supervisor]* in producing collaborative practice, for instance in reflecting on *how that [which we have heard] affects our lives*. This next example shows a team member placing herself *alongside* the counsellor as she offered reflection, in Phase Two, on the impact of the counsellor's story for her as she had listened in Phase One.

Extract 10.1. Joining a community of concern

Tania is the counsellor, Adele the supervisor, and Mary and Pauline are team members, in Supervision 12.

Supervision 12 was introduced in Chapter Nine, when Tania's concern about low client numbers presenting at her agency came to be located in an employment relations discourse. Adele had said to Tania, *So you are it.* This response from the commentary position had had a particular resonance for Tania, making visible her positioning within employment relations, and good counsellor, discourses. This present example is drawn from the beginning of the Phase Two. Mary began the team reflections, making a relational connection with Tania, and noting the impact for her of what she had heard.

> I feel a bit flat really. I'm really feeling for Tania in that situation. You know, the isolation, and I felt she was quite flat when she was talking about it. I could really feel for her, knowing her passion for her work and...

With the reflections begun, it was the responsibility of team members to respond to Mary's beginning, to build together on the joining and witnessing (Weingarten, 2000a) she had begun. Mary had chosen to respond to the flatness and isolation of which she had heard, rather than to other aspects of the conversation, and Mary's reflection from the position of first speaker (Cobb, 1993) set an agenda for the group as they began.

Pauline engaged with Mary, asking her if she would like to speak further to her connection to the isolation story to which she had just responded. In asking Mary to enlarge upon her opening, Pauline's task was to support Mary to focus her sharing towards serving Tania's interests in the supervision. Pauline took a position alongside Mary. Perhaps Mary had some particular knowledge that might be useful to the conversation, she asked:

> Mary, is there something there that you know about isolation, that that was what you responded to, or is…?

Mary went on to elaborate on aspects of counsellor isolation that she had experienced. She identified two aspects of isolation, in particular. She spoke of the isolation of a sole practitioner in private practice, and of the isolation that occurs where a philosophical position is not shared by others in an agency setting. I suggest that Mary was offering a deconstructing commentary on isolation. She spoke about the positions isolation offered and the effects thus produced for counsellors, in her experience. She spoke about the effects of the philosophical isolation on

> what you keep in, and how you define your work, and what you think about your work, and what you choose to think about.

These small and ordinary acts of Mary joining Tania in her concern, and witnessing to the effects of isolation, in both Tania's apparent flatness and Mary's own experience of isolation, proved to be meaningful for Tania. This is how Tania began Phase Three, when Adele and she began to reflect on the team's reflections.

> It was really neat hearing people wondering and caring about that, not wondering and thinking about it by myself. I am really struck by that (difference).

Mary's acts of witnessing worked against the isolation that had produced the discursive conditions in which Tania's concerns about client numbers in her practice had grown. Noting that she had thought of speaking in the supervision of feeling flat in relation to her workplace, Tania went on to speak further about the effects of isolation, taking up

both the sole-practitioner aspects and the philosophical-differences aspects that Mary had offered. Dialogical space had been produced for the deconstruction of another aspect of the problem, and Tania was connected with others as she entered that space.

A community of many voices

Mary's contribution brought into the supervision conversation a thread that had not been developed in Phase One. In Phase One (Excerpt 9.2) one particular aspect of the concern had been storied most fully: Tania's position within employment relations discourse. This second conversational thread, now woven from Phase One, through Phases Two and Three, made visible the effects of isolation and the positions it offered Tania.

> If I wasn't always trying to work these things out by myself…

Tania said, going on to speak of the ways in which isolation had worked to produce the problem she had brought. However, with many voices contributing to the supervision, Tania was no longer *trying to work it out* by herself. She had joined herself with a community of many voices, thus making visible the ways in which the difficulties she had been experiencing were themselves produced in a regime that called for singular action.

In the discussion of Extract 9.2 I presented Adele's comment, in the Phase Four review, that she had refused the invitation to her as supervisor to *come up with something*, to suggest solutions by which Tania might take singular action. Mary, too, had refused any such position. Rather she was making a relational connection to Tania, and locating the problem of isolation in discursive terms and in her own experience. She thus offered a story of resonance that Tania and Adele could select to pick up in the Phase Three conversation or not, depending on Tania's interest in doing so. In this situation, Mary's contribution offered Tania another description that put more words to the story of the problem she had brought for consultation. These words and descriptions, and Mary's voice speaking them, all made connections to community, in this way building professional community and countering professional isolation. The supervision team worked as a community of professional support, producing descriptions of Tania's practice in terms of community action rather than singular action.

In the listening position: resonance with the personal and the professional

While the emphasis of the team's reflections tended to be on a range of professional experiences, reflections were not limited to professional stories. In Chapter Four, I noted Gardner, Bobele, & Biever's (1997) and Bernard and Goodyear's (1998) suggestions that new therapists have a thin store of professional stories to call on. I argued that their suggestion closed off the many possibilities for lived experience beyond the therapy room contributing to our storying of our counselling work. Aileen Cheshire's story of the contribution of her mother, Beatrice, to Aileen's work as a therapist (Cheshire, 2001; White,1997) continues to provide a powerful counter to the idea that somehow our personal lives cannot richly inform our counselling work. Professional communities of concern need not be dependent upon professional resources alone. I go on here to show a reflecting team member joining a counsellor in her work by using a story from her own family life as a contribution towards the possibility-generation for which the counsellor had asked.

Extract 10.2 A giving up story: Taking up and producing an invitation to community

Carol is the counsellor, and Gillian is a team member in Supervision 14.

As she introduced her supervision agenda in Phase One, Carol invited the supervisor and the rest of the group to *think with* her in *making the most* of very significant changes her client had made in his life. She was looking for *ideas, directions and possibilities* as she thought about taking the work forward. I suggest that Carol was wanting to position herself well for the ongoing work, and that consultation with the team as a community of concern could help her story more richly what had been and what might be in this work. In Phase One Carol told the supervisor that this client had changed from high levels of marijuana use and involvement in selling, to a very much-reduced level of personal use. Carol spoke of the restraints there might be for her client in building on these developments and of her appreciation of the significance for her client of these changes that he had already made. Carol's invitation to the team was to *think with* her: we were positioned as supports alongside, a community of concern for the therapeutic team of Carol and her client. I suggest that *thinking with* is yet another contrast with the *come up with something* position Adele spoke of being called to (Extract 9.2). Both Adele's idea of working to *make visible,* to deconstruct respectfully, and Carol's request for *thinking with* offer position calls that invite collaboration. Respectful deconstruction and

collaboration are discursive practices different from the paternalism of *coming up with something for*, and *thinking for*.

In Phase Two Gillian took up the kind of *thinking with* position Carol had invited. She offered a story from her own very recent family life. Although it is quite long, I reproduce it here to demonstrate the work it contributed towards Carol's request for the team to *think with* her to generate possibilities for practice. Gillian's offering of her story had a different quality from the *Why don't you try?* intervention that I discussed in Chapter Seven or the reporting of *what I did with my client* genre of talk that is a teller-centred or teller's-client-centred report of facts and instrumental action. Gillian offered knowledge of a giving-up story in her own family, thus bringing to the team other voices that might join the community of concern. Gillian, in telling her story, centred her inquiry on the possibilities it might offer for Carol and her client in the manner of decentred sharing (White, 1997). Carol and her supervision interest remained at the centre of the purpose for telling.

> As I was listening there - I think Carol said that her client is in his thirties somewhere - I was recalling a conversation I had with my Dad over the last few days about when Dad gave up smoking nicotine. He would have been about that age [of Carol's client]. And so here was I in my forties talking with Dad about my memories of the effects of him giving up smoking when I was young. And I was just thinking about this man [Carol's client], and wondering where do his children figure in his giving up, and I was imagining - I guess I was thinking about this in terms of Carol saying, "How can I make the most of these changes?" – I was wondering if that's a possible place, to invite him to think about his children when they are, say, forty, and what these changes that he's been making <u>now</u>, how they will see them in terms of <u>their</u> life and <u>his</u> life. What would be the significance of how old the children are now, and them looking back later and saying, "Oh, I remember, Dad, when this happened".
>
> And one of the things I was remembering with Dad, the other day, was somebody else coming into our house and commenting that the house smelt different, which was, you know, that audience [to the change], and [I am wondering], too, what

might his children be noticing about other people noticing [the changes he has been making] now?

A story was in this way offered to Carol as a possibility on which she could draw in thinking about the work of making the most of the changes her client had been making. There are some conversational moves that I might call "typically-narrative" here: the retelling of a telling (White, 1995) ; the audience to the changes; the re-membering of lives (White, 1995); the relational connections. We might assume that Gillian's retelling of her conversation with her father touched her: but more than that it told, briefly, of another father's giving up story and its impact for his children. In this way it offered Carol a possibility for consideration as she reflected on the work of this particular therapeutic relationship, and how she might be most helpful to her client in working to build on the developments he had already made. The story's telling offered both Carol and her client links to another's story, a story of change, of relationship, and of time passing. Through that story Carol and her client were then offered links with voices in a community of concern whose story they could use to support their work.

The value of Gillian having situated the inquiry in her own life story, rather than offering some more disembodied inquiry about the client's hopes for his children, was immediately apparent as Carol responded, in Phase Three.

> I mean, I especially liked what Gillian said, because we have talked a bit about his children, and what they're noticing, and what difference it might make and that; but that kind of putting it right in the future seems like a good idea to speculate about; [to make] some guesses around what meaning they might make of that, in twenty years time, or whenever. Yeah.

Gillian's story connected with work that Carol and her client had already done, and offered possibilities for building those stories further. It could perhaps add substance to a story that had already begun. Carol then continued,

> I'm expecting, or maybe guessing, that it might become even more a focus of the work [his children]. I mean he has some fairly clear ideas

about the kids, and he's got really close relationships with his kids - safe relationships - close relationships with the kids, and quite open relationships with his kids. And he's always maintained that his use has not affected them. And I've never argued with that. But I'm wondering whether exploring that in more detail might be more possible now than has been possible before. But he's very clear that he would prefer himself to be less of a marijuana dad, and so maybe some work around the kids would be really good. It's sparked off quite a lot of thoughts actually, in terms of that.

Links have been made between past work, present conversation, and possible future work. Carol has storied in the possibilities for practice offered by the team positioned to *think with* her in a supervision of possibility.

This example is drawn from a supervision conversation where Carol used the group as a community of concern to help her to take a generative stance in her work. In this way supervision was not constructed as a site to engage with problems or deficits to be put right. Rather, it was constructed as a site where we joined in reflection to forge new possibilities together, to chart sites that had not yet been charted, and to speculate about where ways ahead might lead. The lens of our looking was imagination. The emphasis was on thinking forward, making up possibilities for practice, in community. This example demonstrates the value of the resource that this process gives access to.

My inclusion of this story has been informed partly by my ongoing work in supervision. As a supervisor I do not regard supervision conversations as a grand opportunity for the retelling of my own stories, personal and professional, to a captive audience. However, I have found that when there is a particular resonance (White, 1995), such as this example illustrates, and when stories are offered in a way that centres the resonance and the possibilities the resonance may offer the counsellor's story, this kind of decentred sharing of personal stories serves supervision well. It links particular stories with cultural stories and with the communities in which such stories are performed. When particular stories are located in cultural stories, we have

more tools available to us for making sense: other aspects of the telling become differently available to us.

"Grappling with ideas" in listening and speaking positions

The team worked as a community in which professional stories were performed, providing a vehicle for making links between particular stories of counselling practice and stories from the professional culture. With the project focussing on inquiry into what constructionism offers supervision practice at the same time as we were working to produce that practice, particular stories of practice were often located in accounts of epistemology as the team worked to support counsellors in making meaning of and for their practice. Anne called this epistemological work *grappling with ideas*. In the Review after Supervision Nine, Liz was musing on the ways in which the reflecting team process worked, saying that it was at once *respectful and safe* and at the same time,

> I was going to say challenging, but it's developmental in that it enables growth ... It's got no notion of challenging of *being*, the challenging is of ideas, and it's not confronting of persons.

Anne went on to elaborate, speaking about the Phase Two team reflections.

> It's not like directly confronting personal meaning in a judgmental way; it's grappling with the ideas; it's like a space to grapple with ideas; creating space for conversation around things.

Both Liz and Anne were speaking in everyday language of the value of a discursive approach to supervision, valuing the kinds of decentred and deconstructing inquiry employed for rigorous investigation of ideas and practices. It is these kinds of comments that have led me to suggest that talk about what we are taking to be true, epistemology-talk, is a central concern of supervision. Grappling with ideas is more than 'case conceptualisation' for that term conjures up a micro-focus that suggests that one 'case' can be conceptualised independently of others. Rather epistemology-talk is concerned with the theoretical tools and the theory of knowledge by which our thinking for practice is constituted.

Extract 10.3. Deconstructing inquiry: legitimising practice

Laura is counsellor and Elise, supervisor, in Supervision 8. Alex and Gwen are team members.

Phase One

Laura The issue for me around my work with her is what I experience happening to me that I wasn't very happy with.

The bit that concerned me, I guess, and it disappoints me is, that when this came up again I found it hard to stay with my client [description omitted for client's privacy]... its been hard for me to stay with my client and not be with the 14 year old.

And I'm having to work really hard at being with her. She's my client, not this 14 year old.

And there's part of me that wants to say, "Try harder, she's 14". And I'm thinking, here's my client, and I'm wanting to say, "Try harder. She's only 14, and that's tough".

... I feel like I'm betraying my client, and being alongside her sister.

Phase Two

Gwen And I'm thinking, she [Laura] might have some knowing about what a 14 year old without a voice, what they might hope that their caregiver could get from a counsellor. [...] Is that some useful knowing she's [Laura's] got that's inviting the 14 year old in?

Alex Into the counselling room?

Gwen Yes.

Alex So Laura had a problem with having the 14 year old in the counselling room? What did you make of that? She was bothered by it.

...

At times our work to locate our practice in both constructionist thinking and in the local counselling community left us grappling to find common dialogical space in practice and in reflections, and also to speak of difference in ways that were dialogical. At other times it was constructionist thinking in practice that helped us grapple with the professional ideas that were shaping practice. Deconstructing inquiry supported us to bring epistemology talk from the margins of supervision talk.

Deconstructing dominant professional discourse

Grappling with ideas often involved the deconstruction of dominant professional discourses. At times the material that counsellors brought to supervision could be understood in terms of their being positioned unfavourably in particular professional discourses: in the last chapter, Excerpt 9.2 showed Tania positioned unfavourably in a *good counsellors* discourse when client numbers were low. This next example shows the team asking about the discursive practices produced by individualism in counselling, practices that positioned the counsellor unfavourably in another version of *good counsellor* discourse.

Extract 10.3. Deconstructing inquiry: legitimising practice

Laura is counsellor and Elise, supervisor, in Supervision 8. Alex and Gwen are team members.[1]

Before going on to present the data from the Phase Two conversation, I situate the example by describing the work of Phase One. Laura had spoken with Elise about frustration with herself in having difficulty staying engaged with her client. She was frustrated that her attention in counselling had been constantly drawn to concern for her client's younger sister about whom the client had spoken, but who was not the focus of the client's purpose in consulting Laura. Laura set out the dilemma in terms that spoke of her own problematic practice: she was misguided for her interest in and concern for her client's sister.

> The issue for <u>me</u> around my work with her is what I experience happening to <u>me</u> that I wasn't very happy with.

---

[1] This instance of practice was discussed briefly in Crocket (1999a).

Alex Yeah. So you're also interested in [Laura's interest in her client's 14 year old sister], and you're not interested in Laura particularly getting rid of her knowing, or her compassion for the 14 year old?

Gwen No. But rather consulting.

Alex Yeah, consulting with that, in her role as a counsellor? …

I'm interested that you're kind of legitimating Laura having some knowledge and compassion for the fourteen year old. I'm interested in that, too, because is there an idea in counselling that excludes us from having some, even some responsibility, for other people in that person's [client's] life? I think it's a good question [to be asking]. Sometimes when I've got a male client, I'm curious, because of things I hear from him, about how this might be impacting on his wife, or his partner.

…

Alex Those things that silence the voice of the counsellor. I realise that it's something [for a counsellor] to navigate.

Gwen To negotiate, yeah.

Alex But how do we draw that line between what people we allow into the counselling room, in a sense, and to take our attention; and with some I suppose it's easier, because its more clear that we're interested in, and even bring up abuse in the relationship, and as a counsellor we have some responsibility to make that visible, when it involves a partner?

And it's culturally, like we're "allowed" to do that with partners: partners have a different status than other people in people's lives. Do partners have higher status than friends or children or siblings?

I was thinking, why isn't the fourteen year old - I can see some reasons why and I did hear Laura's concerns about how it was distracting her from her work with the client - but why isn't she allowed to be [metaphorically] in the room, in some ways? Is it her age, or is it because she's a sister? If she was ten, would it have been more OK, or less OK, or?

The bit that concerned me, I guess, and it disappoints me is, that when this came up again I found it hard to stay with my client [description omitted for client's privacy]... its been hard for me to stay with my client and not be with the 14 year old.

And I'm having to work really hard at being with her. She's my client, not this 14 year old.

And there's part of me that wants to say, "Try harder, she's 14". And I'm thinking, here's my client, and I'm wanting to say, "Try harder. She's only 14, and that's tough".

... I feel like I'm betraying my client, and being alongside her sister.

The idea at work in constructing Laura as misguided for her interest in her client's younger sister posits individual counselling as focused only on the individual in the counselling room: it directs counsellors to answer very clearly the question, "Who is your client?" The implication is that counsellors should not be diverted by the intrusion of thoughts about referrers or parents, for example, for the individual counselling relationship is privileged. Laura said: *She's my client, not the 14 year old.*

The Phase One supervision conversation had paid most attention to the client situation. The Phase Two reflecting conversation took on a significantly different focus. Gwen and Alex raised the question of what Laura's noticing of a younger sister might mean, and what knowledge Laura may have (about fourteen year olds and what they need) that had led to her noticing in the ways she had. What if, rather than an activity that should be at the margins of Laura's counselling work, her noticing had a place at the centre? Could it be legitimate, her noticing, could it be based on soundness?

Gwen And I'm thinking, she [Laura] might have some knowing about what a 14 year old without a voice, what they might hope that their caregiver could get from a

Phase Three

Laura When I began [the supervision] it was about baring my soul... I've been aware of not feeling good that this [experiencing a distracting concern for my client's sister] was happening...

Before it felt like I had this all on my shoulder and I was thinking, "Get a grip here, who's your client?"

[Now] I can be a voice for her [younger sister] and that is OK. In fact, I feel some responsibility to do that.

...

And I think - the analogy with other situations - it would be a lot clearer for me if it was a male client and they were talking about some abusive behaviour; it would be clearer for me about my concern for their partner.

counsellor. […] Is that some useful knowing she's [Laura's] got that's inviting the 14 year old in?

Alex Into the counselling room?

Gwen Yes.

Alex So Laura had a problem with having the 14 year old in the counselling room? What did you make of that? She was bothered by it.

Alex and Gwen raised the possibility that Laura's interest in the 14 year old sister of her client might be a legitimate interest. The call of "Who is your client?" discourse and its individualistic focus was open for investigation. Alex's question to Gwen opened the possibility for many voices. *What did you make of it?*: the assumed authority of the idea that the client is only the person in the room was destabilised by the inquiry. Summarising Gwen's reply, Alex said:

> Yeah. So you're also interested in [Laura's interest in her client's 14 year old sister], and you're not interested in Laura particularly getting rid of her knowing, or her compassion for the 14 year old?

Gwen No. But rather consulting.

Alex Yeah, consulting with that, in her role as a counsellor?

> I'm interested that you're kind of legitimating Laura having some knowledge and compassion for the fourteen year old. I'm interested in that, too, because is there an idea in counselling that excludes us from having some, even some responsibility, for other people in that person's [client's] life? I think it's a good question [to be asking]. Sometimes when I've got a male client, I'm curious, because of things I hear from him, about how this might be impacting on his wife, or his partner.

Here Alex is responding to Gwen's inquiry, commenting on it in a deconstructing version of the commentator position: *is there an idea in counselling..?* In asking about the construction of counselling practice Alex added to the inquiry. Her speaking located what had been a problem located in Laura – *I'm betraying my client* – to a problem constituted in counselling discourse: *is there an idea in counselling*. Alex also situated her inquiry in her own practice, showing herself disrupting *the idea in counselling* that counsellors are excluded from responsibility for other people in the client's life: *sometimes when I have got a male client...*

The team conversation both disrupted the construction of Laura's interest in her client's sibling as inappropriate and also offered an alternative possible understanding of that interest. That alternative understanding was situated alongside another, perhaps analogous, practice experience of inquiry into relationship. In offering an analogous situation, Alex was opening further space for speaking to the alternative idea that had been produced: perhaps Laura's interest was sound. That perhaps-analogous practice experience made overt the gender power relation that produced Alex's concern for women partners not in the therapy room, thus with subtlety opening the possibility for consideration that an age-related power relation was producing the concern Laura was experiencing in her counselling work. Alex was not asserting directly that therapy is a political act and that Laura had responsibility for the younger sister in the same way as a counsellor, hearing of particular concerns a male client brought to counselling, might consider their responsibility in terms of gender and power relations. Rather the conversational space was being used to open up the possibility, for Laura's consideration, that her noticing of the younger sister might be understood as a responsibility to be taken up rather than as a problem to be overcome. Through a careful opening of dialogical space between Gwen and Alex, Laura was being invited, as she sat in the listening position, to question the dominant professional idea that would have her focus only on her client. She was also being offered, for consideration, an alternative professional idea that counsellors have a responsibility to understand power relations and to consider acting as an advocate in response to those understandings. I suggest that the *offering* of ideas carries an important relational quality, for what is offered may be taken up or it may be refused. In their inquiry Alex and Gwen made ideas accessible and available; as the ideas in their conversation were dialogised, Alex and

Gwen demonstrated making professional discourse negotiable. Our practice stance is something we make up, they were saying by their actions.

As the conversation continued, Alex offered further inquiry that destabilised the construction of Laura's interest as problematic. She commented:

> Those things that silence the voice of the counsellor. I realise that it's something [for a counsellor] to navigate.
>
> To negotiate, yeah.

Alex has suggested that we navigate our way in practice amongst landmarks and texts of reference provided by professional knowledge. To be silenced is not somehow individual counsellor deficiency, but rather a usual part of navigating and negotiating our way through the practices of counselling. Alex continued:

> But how do we draw that line between what people we allow into the counselling room, in a sense, and to take our attention; and with some I suppose it's easier, because its more clear that we're interested in, and even bring up abuse in the relationship, and as a counsellor we have some responsibility to make that visible, when it involves a partner?

The conversation thus went on to destabilise the authority of the (partner) analogy as a reference point for this instance of practice. Alex and Gwen were not taking positions of certainty about Laura's practice in their conversation, but rather asking questions that affected us all as a community of counsellors finding our way.

> And it's culturally, like we're "allowed" to do that with partners: partners have a different status than other people in people's lives. Do partners have higher status than friends or children or siblings?
>
> I was thinking, why isn't the fourteen year old - I can see some reasons why and I did hear Laura's concerns about how it was distracting her from her work with

> the client - but why isn't she allowed to be [metaphorically] in the room, in some ways? Is it her age, or is it because she's a sister? If she was ten, would it have been more OK, or less OK, or?

Alex was positioned as an inquirer about how ideas about practice are constructed. Supervision was being produced as dialogical inquiry, as these deconstructing questions asked how a discourse of individual counselling worked to produce particular practices that privilege individualism above relationship. The team's inquiry was directed towards professional practice (not Laura's practice): how are the rules and traditions of practice made up, they were asking.

Laura's response, in Phase Three, to the team's reflections makes visible the repositioning these inquiries made available to her.

> ...When I began [the supervision] it was about baring my soul... I've been aware of not feeling good that this [experiencing a distracting concern for my client's sister] was happening...
>
> Before it felt like I had this all on my shoulder and I was thinking, "Get a grip here, who's your client?"
>
> [Now] I can be a voice for her [younger sister] and that is OK. In fact, I feel some responsibility to do that.

In the *baring my soul* and *burden* metaphors we hear resonance of the confessional metaphor: the counsellor is positioned as supplicant. However, the team's conversation undermined the authority of the metaphor of supervision as confession. Alex and Gwen were not captured by the idea that there was anything to confess. Rather, out of their reflections on practice, the knowledge and care that was expressed in Laura's interest in a family member, not in the therapy room, was offered possible redescription. Laura's knowledge, care and interest, as the Phase Three conversation reflected on the Phase Two reflections, came to be constructed as productive, rather than obstructive, of ethical practice. The conversational layers offered Laura a repositioning from

deficiency and ineffectiveness, to agency and responsibility. Her concern for a younger sister moved from being constructed as erroneous/non-permitted, to permitted, to a responsibility she wished to fulfil, because she now had alternative accounts available to her with which to story her concern. Relational responsibility had been brought forward as a possibility for practice. Counselling texts produced by the discourses of individualism had been dialogised.

The team's deconstructing inquiry was supported by their inquiry about the politics of a perhaps-analogous situation. Laura spoke in Phase Three of the value of Alex's offering of an analogous instance of practice, in helping her reflect on her preferences for her practice, and thus to reposition herself. I suggest that the use of analogy helped make the deconstruction the team was offering accessible to Laura, partly by making visible how other counsellors *made up* their practice.

> And I think - the analogy with other situations - it would be a lot clearer for me if it was a male client and they were talking about some abusive behaviour; it would be clearer for me about my concern for their partner.

Supporting an inquiry such as Alex offered in Phase Two, *Is there an idea in counselling...* is the idea that counsellors are producing our practices out of sets of ideas, and that these ideas are contested and contestable. Alex's question demonstrates deconstructing, decentred inquiry as practice of everyday professional language. As Anne noted, it was ideas and the practices those ideas produced that were being put under scrutiny, not counsellors. At the same time, it was not a distanced, disembodied speaking of ideas, for we heard Alex taking a position in terms of her practice, and we heard her situating herself and her practice in the inquiry. She was positioning herself as an active member of a professional community of concern, producing practice, and she was attending to the supervision conversation as a relational practice. *I'm interested that you're kind of legitimating Laura having some knowledge ... I'm interested in that, too, because is there an idea in counselling that excludes us from having ...* Ideas were open for inquiry as ideas that constituted us all. In Anne's words, the team members were engaged in grappling with ideas in ways that did not directly confront personal meaning in a judgmental way. Ideas were also open for inquiry as ideas that we take up

and reproduce or transform. Ideas about practice do directly engage us in speaking to the politics of our practices and the epistemologies out of which our practices were and might be produced. As a professional community of concern, team members together produced what I think of as a dialogical clearing: together they trampled the grass of the taken for granted professional landscape, examining its formation, clearing a dialogical space for new conversations. Together they trampled possible routes from the familiar to the clearing where new meanings could be made. The possible routes become visible, for instance, through the joining actions, such as the implication in the inquiry that this is a practice dilemma for us all. The team's work provided the dialogical clearing, and some routes to that clearing, in which Laura, too, might engage with the politics and epistemology of practice on terms not readily accessible at the centre of dominant professional talk that had produced the concern she had brought to supervision. The ways in which a discourse of individualism produces strategies for counselling practice were rendered visible.

Supervision was thus produced as a site for the dialogical and relational evaluation of those professional knowledges by which our practices are produced and which we produce in our practices. As reflecting team supervision was produced in this example, in the Phase Two conversation team members might take meta-discursive positions in a deconstructing supervision. From these positions team members can be "active and purposive" (Willigb, 1999, p.194) in the positions we take up as we respond to the professional stories we hear. As a professional community of concern, we are positioned to evaluate professional knowledge for the discursive practices and positions offered us, and for the effects of those positions for the exercise of professional responsibility in our counselling work. Not only are we building theory from practice, but we are also evaluating theory in relation with practice and in relation with other theory.

Grappling with ideas: epistemology talk

In Chapter Three I introduced the suggestion that in speaking in supervision of the ethics and effectiveness of counselling practice, counsellors and supervisors inevitably traffick in epistemology talk. They traffick in epistemology talk whether that talk is at the surface of conversation or in the subtext, at the margins of the speaking rather than at the centre. Noting that epistemology was not one of the

dimensions of Holloway's model, I argued for epistemology being central to the work of constructionist supervision. The previous example from practice, Extract 10.3, showed the team bringing to the surface and centre of the talk, for inquiry, the epistemological positions producing particular practices. In that example and in other examples of constructionist reflecting team practice, team members could be seen taking the position of saying, *Let's work at understanding what sort of text is producing these ideas about counselling practice.* In this way the focus of supervision, as I have been arguing, is how we think about and might think about our practice, not just on the pragmatics of how dominant professional discourse asserts practice is done. We are unpicking the origins of statements of fact or claims to know, and asking how such authority is produced. We are thus locating our practices in particular moral orders. Here, in Extract10.3, Alex and Gwen were unpicking some distinctions between positions produced for the counsellor by a discourse of individualism and those produced by one of relational connection, although they were not named that way at the time.

Some of the tensions and difficulties that accompany these ways of constructing supervision as an authorising practice that evaluates counsellor knowledge are made visible in the example I go on to discuss next. This particular instance illustrates the reflecting team again engaging in purposeful inquiry about the putting together of practice. I include this example for its contribution to a significant aspect of the project for one team member. At the end of the project Maureen spoke of the effects of working at the ongoing moral production of the story of her professional practice:

> Some of the questions that have been put to me this year have made me have to decide which side of the fence, or whatever, just to make decisions. And so with each decision I've made, then, I guess my own practice, and my own biases, or whatever you like to call them, my own preferences have become clearer to me.

This next example shows our professional community of concern joining Maureen in grappling with decisions about her practice stance. The team supported Maureen to in the negotiation of the ethics of work with a male client who had been involved in violence against a woman. The team's work in taking commentary positions and

locating ideas for practice in approaches to knowledge opened space for Maureen, the counsellor in the listening position, to notice the ways in which practice was shaped, and so to move toward taking a purposeful, preferred approach.

As I begin to tell this story, I notice again the problems of reproducing text from conversations that were woven and interwoven. Presenting an excerpt is complex for each excerpt depends upon and speaks to what has come before. The supervision from which this extract is drawn had begun with a conversation in which, I shall suggest in the following chapter, Maureen was grappling with the mystique of being *a good narrative counsellor* and seeking to locate a place for herself within that category. That work, to position herself favourably within a *good narrative counsellor* discourse, situated the team's work in relation with the concerns Maureen presented as the supervision conversation continued: they were sensitive to the positioning Maureen was seeking for herself in a discourse of narrative counselling.

Introducing Extract 10.4. Taking responsibility for taking a position

In the Phase One conversation Maureen introduced this part of the supervision conversation in terms of wanting to *think about the ethics* of her interest in working with a client in areas other than those in the agenda set by her client at the outset of the counselling. She said that the client's agenda had included having a *sounding board* and having someone to trust to discuss things with. However, Maureen was concerned that she had an agenda different from her client:

> With a lot of other clients I would be horrified that I would have a different agenda from my client; but with this person - it's exposing a lot of my prejudices - because he's male, and because there have been violent episodes, that that is what is tempting me, or what's leading me to go against what he said the purpose of our work is.

While I recognise that this instance raises many possible areas of discussion, I have introduced it here to explore epistemology talk in supervision, and to highlight the effects of epistemology talk at a moment when instrumental talk could have been tempting for a supervisor, who, privileging the immediate ethics of practice, was concerned about the implications of counsellor uncertainty in the face of a problem of

male violence. I am not suggesting that a supervisor step aside from responsibility, but I am suggesting that responsibility can be produced in many ways. One of those ways is in the work of epistemology-talk, in accompanying a counsellor in ongoing evaluation of and storying of the professional practice truths that they employ in their counselling work.

I have elsewhere argued (Crocket, 2001) that Maureen was engaged, in this instance of practice, in negotiating her professional identity as she found her way amongst competing knowledge claims. On one hand her thinking was shaped by the idea that she may have some responsibility as counsellor to address with her client his *attitude towards women* and *violent episodes*. And on the other hand was a discourse of client-centredness that positioned a counsellor as neutral and unconditionally non-judgemental, and thus positioned a client as the (sole) determiner of the counselling agenda. Client-centredness had been more productive of and more thoroughly storied into Maureen's practice than ideas about the politics of counsellor responsibility. Positioned as neutral within a client centred discourse, Maureen was making meaning of her interest in addressing her client's *attitude towards women* on terms that constructed that interest as *prejudice* on her part, as perhaps *some sort of private crusade*, and as perhaps *oppression* of her client.

The Phase One conversation worked at making overt the assumptions that were creating this story, and at the same time it worked to open space for speaking more fully the story of Maureen's possible responsibility to initiate with her client conversation that would more directly address gender discourse and violence. For example, Olive asked:

> Can you tell me about the ideas that lead you to say, the ideas you have that lead you to say that there is more to this work than just the agenda of being a sounding board?

The focus of Olive's inquiry was not on what Maureen should do, but on what ideas were producing her thinking about her practice, and her practice. Olive's inquiry worked to open more space for speaking of that which client centred discourse produced at the margins, disquiet about counsellor responsibility in relation with male violence. The

inquiry worked to dialogise ideas about the negotiation of agendas in counselling, paying attention to Maureen as the agent of the concern that client-centredness might not be enough here. Olive's interest at this moment was in making space for the local production of meaning: *the ideas you have*. In this inquiry Olive was taking responsibility for taking a position in the politics of the work. She was taking responsibility for using inquiry to make more accessible to the dialogue an account of alternative positions for a counsellor as a negotiator of the agenda in counselling, and as ethically and responsibly interested in inquiry about male violence.

In Phase Two the team located their contribution in epistemological terms. These particular contributions offered Maureen a position from which to gain further authority in disputing the position in relation with her client that client-centred discourse offered her. In the listening position, too, Maureen was supported to review ideas, and approaches to practice, as the team centred their inquiry on the site of ideas rather than on the site of Maureen's (professional) person.

At the outset of the supervision the problem had been constructed as an ethical one: is it oppressive of a client for a counsellor to work to influence the therapeutic agenda, Maureen had asked. Some team members had considerable experience working in the area of violence. Their analyses of the politics of working in the area of violence would construct the ethics of this counselling work on terms different from those produced within client-centred discourse. They would have agreed with Hare-Mustin (1994), for example, about the importance of therapists taking responsibility for introducing to the therapy room aspects of gender discourse that would not otherwise be available for speaking. How, then, might they position themselves to reflect in Phase Two if supervision was to be constructed as a storying of the counsellor's professional identity, as dialogical inquiry rather than instrumental activity? How might they position themselves as a community of concern, both in relation with concerns about responsibility and violence and also with Maureen's work in the first part of the supervision to position herself within the category of *narrative counsellor*?

Extract 10.4. Taking responsibility for taking a position

Maureen is counsellor and Olive is supervisor in Supervision 7. Frances, Phoebe and Belinda are team members.

Extract 10.4. Taking responsibility for taking a position

Maureen is counsellor and Olive is supervisor in Supervision 7. Frances and Phoebe are team members.

Phase One:

Maureen

With a lot of other clients I would be horrified that I would have a different agenda from my client; but with this person - it's exposing a lot of my prejudices - because he's male, and because there have been violent episodes, that that is what is tempting me, or what's leading me to go against what he said the purpose of our work is.

...

Olive Can you tell me about the ideas that lead you to say, the ideas you have that lead you to say that there is more to this work than just the agenda of being a sounding board?

Phase Two:

Phoebe Yes, for me, I was thinking, "sounding board", what's a sounding board? Does a sounding board mean that one person speaks and the other can't, that it's a one-way thing? Does that [one-way speaking] then silence the counsellor if they are the sounding board? [I'm interested in] just the idea of being a sounding board. What does the metaphor mean, of a sounding board?

Maybe some of the more modernist notions of what a counsellor is silence the taking of a position by a counsellor.

...

Phoebe I think we can claim to have a position against violence...

...

Phoebe I wonder whether that sounding board idea, and some traditional therapeutic ideas about what counsellors do, and what position they have, have silenced Maureen from having a position.

Having introduced something of the complexity of the positions offered thus far, I go on now to focus on the team's work in Phase Two as they engaged in deconstructing inquiry into the production of our practices.

Phoebe's beginning saw her, too, paying attention to the story of counselling that produced a position of supposed neutrality for a counsellor, a position in which Maureen was restrained from responding to her concerns about violence as she did not want to be *oppressive* or *crusading*.

> Yes, for me, I was thinking, "sounding board", what's a sounding board?

Asking about the positions in relation produced by the counsellor-as-sounding board account, Phoebe continued a deconstructing inquiry.

> Does a sounding board mean that one person speaks and the other can't, that it's a one-way thing? Does that [one-way speaking] then silence the counsellor if they are the sounding board? [I'm interested in] just the idea of being a sounding board. What does the metaphor mean, of a sounding board?

Further unsettling of the authority of client-centred discourse occurred here, as Phoebe suggested that *sounding board* was a *metaphor* (and, implicitly, not a reified rule of counselling conduct), and as she asked about the effects of the position offered counsellors when the sounding board metaphor constructs the counselling relationship: is the counsellor *silenced*?

Phoebe was here, I suggest, taking a position that supported Maureen's storying of what she, Phoebe, believed to be a responsible and ethical counsellor position. Phoebe was herself, as a team member, *more than a* (neutral) *sounding board*, for a particular position was producing her inquiry. Shortly after, Phoebe suggested

> Maybe some of the more modernist notions of what a counsellor is silence the taking of a position by a counsellor.

Frances

I think we're always taking a position, as you talked about. Whether more modernist thinking kind of has this value of being non-judgemental, and those beliefs and attitudes, [that is a position].

Whatever you are doing it is a political action in some way, either disrupting or maintaining the status quo, or maintaining it or taking it apart and challenging it. It's good to think about these things, because we are always doing that [taking a position] whether we are conscious of it or not.

Phase Three

Maureen

Phoebe mentioned that some modernist counselling ideas position counsellors in a silenced role. And I recognised that as something that I have been battling with and am battling with. Because I had a lot of experiences in counselling-related things before I came into this work I am doing now, and I'm still shedding the influences of that [style of counselling]. One of those influences is about being client-centred, being behind the client, non-judgemental and absolutely accepting – which actually positions me in a silence, it silences me. What I'm recognising is that part of the discomfort for me has been the friction of recognising that I am working with this client against those ideas of how a counsellor should be [that is, silent], and my uncertainty about [my doing] that. I needed time to think about it to become clearer on my own position. I'm also realising that what was causing the [questions] – "What am I doing? Am I being unethical here? Am I being directive?" and all the rest [of the questions] – is the positioning that those particular theories would place me in.

Phoebe identified the restraints on Maureen *taking a position* as perhaps being located in discourse, in *modernist notions*. Phoebe also took a position in changing the terms of the speaking: counsellor actions that had previously been constructed as *oppression*, *crusading* and *prejudice* became *taking a position*. Phoebe herself was clearly *taking a position* in her speaking. She was taking a position against the construction of counsellor responsibility in relation with violence as crusading or oppressive. Her next conversational move offered further legitimacy to the act of *taking a position* she went on to take an overt position herself in respect of Maureen's concern:

> I think we can claim to have a position against violence...

Then, from position-taking, Phoebe assumed a more tentative stance. She moved from more general de-centred deconstructing inquiry and commentary (taking in the discursive vista through a wide angle lens), to locate this particular instance of practice in the inquiry (the close up lens on particular positioning).

> I wonder whether that sounding board idea, and some traditional therapeutic ideas about what counsellors do, and what position they have, have silenced Maureen from having a position.

In her reflections and inquiry, Phoebe assumed a version of commentary position to engage in epistemology talk. She was asking, what do these sets of ideas mean for how we practice. As Anne noted at the subsequent Review meeting, *personal meaning* was not confronted in a *judgmental way*. Phoebe's own work was clearly constructionist: according to Phoebe's account Maureen had been restrained from speaking because of her position within a counsellor-as-sounding-board discourse that did not allow a counsellor agenda-negotiating rights. Phoebe took a position in two ways: in stating *I think that we can claim to have a position against violence*, and in deconstructing the idea, counsellor as *sounding board*, that did not accord with her own epistemological preferences (nor with those towards which Maureen had presented herself as migrating, earlier in this session and earlier in the project). Phoebe did not, for instance, choose to respond to the dangers-of-*evangelism* story (on the terms of which the response she had made could itself be constructed as evangelical). In her reflecting team response

Phoebe was inviting Maureen to join the production of the dilemma according to a constructionist epistemology.

Frances continued in the terms Phoebe had offered, both commenting on the matter of taking a position, and in doing so, taking a position herself.

> I think we're always taking a position, as you talked about. Whether more modernist thinking kind of has this value of being non-judgemental, and those beliefs and attitudes, [that is a position].
>
> Whatever you are doing it is a political action in some way, either disrupting or maintaining the status quo, or maintaining it or taking it apart and challenging it. It's good to think about these things, because we are always doing that [taking a position] whether we are conscious of it or not.

Frances, too, was offering a constructionist understanding of the dilemma, suggesting that to be complicit in a client's agenda was no more value free than to engage a client in thinking about matters of gender and violence. She was thus disturbing the taken for granted tenets of client-centred discourse that had been positioning Maureen. Her speaking was from a position of joining Maureen: *it's good to think about these things*. Her use of the inclusive plural first person pronoun also spoke of joining and of a position in professional community: *we are always doing that*. Later Frances spoke of an example of taking a position in her own practice, situating her claim in an analogous situation as Alex had in Extract 10.3. Frances said that she was careful not to join the agenda of women who have been the recipients of violence who come to counselling wanting to learn how to *manage their men better*, to cope better with the violent relationship. In this way Frances was speaking in support of an epistemology of practice that suggests that counselling agendas are not neutral, and that counsellors have a responsibility to work for social justice inside and outside the counselling room, and particularly in negotiating an agenda. Belinda added from her practice a further analagous example of not accepting a client's weight loss agenda without engaging them in a wider conversation. She, too, added depth to the professional story of counsellors *taking a position*. Team members were making links between epistemology and practice,

making the links accessible in examples in their own practices. The tone of the conversation, however, was not instruction-talk. Rather team members were unpacking a professional claim about client-centredness, reworking the ideas and the words that constructed that claim, and offering possibilities for alternative claims. These possibilities for alternative claims and practices were located not just in speculation but in the realities of their own day to day practices. In these ways team members were engaged in possibility-talk in respect of Maureen's concern, opening further the space wherein it was possible for a counsellor to make claims to knowledge and to negotiate therapeutic agendas with clients. I claim that Maureen was not being called into a new orthodoxy – 'Do it our way' - but that as she sat in the listening position, she was audience to her colleagues making transparent the ideas that they called on in making up their practices. At the same time, the team were not putting their ideas forward in a neutral way, as though anything goes: they were taking a position that it is an ethical charge upon a counsellor to take a position, and they were making their taking that position transparent. Again, supervision talk was about locating oneself in a moral order.

The team's work itself produced the practice, of the responsible taking of a position, that Maureen had been struggling to authorise herself to use, but which had been constructed in her speaking as crusading and evangelical. Team members took witting and transparent positions and used skills of inquiry to make an invitation to responsibility to Maureen. A client-centred story of counsellor neutrality had been unsettled from the centre of professional talk, as an alternative epistemology was storied more fully. That alternative epistemology produced counsellor responsibility in terms of relational politics. Maureen had been offered an invitation to consider responsibility in attending carefully to her own positioning in taking a philosophical stance, and to consider the implications for responsible action in counselling. It rested now with the supervisor and counsellor to reflect, in Phase Three, on the tools for thinking about practice that these reflections had offered.

Amongst the ways that the team conversation was helpful to Maureen was the locating of the dilemma in epistemological terms: she was constructed as *grappling with ideas*. Maureen took up the position offered by this construction in her response in Phase Three. I am interested to notice her use of the word *mentioned*, in the extract below,

because it constructs Phoebe's speaking as having-made-ideas-available rather than as a proselytising or crusading or persuading into (alternative) orthodoxy. This is important if the reflecting team as a professional community of concern is to be an open, multivocal community producing ethical practice dialogically and relationally both amongst its own members and with the wider professional community. It is important, too, for there is a great distance between *mentioning* and *crusading*. Maureen has seen how a (supervision) agenda could be extended and an invitation to responsibility offered without oppression or crusading.

> Phoebe mentioned that some modernist counselling ideas position counsellors in a silenced role. And I recognised that as something that I have been battling with and am battling with. Because I had a lot of experiences in counselling-related things before I came into this work I am doing now, and I'm still shedding the influences of that [style of counselling]. One of those influences is about being client-centred, being behind the client, non-judgemental and absolutely accepting - which actually positions me in a silence, it silences me. What I'm recognising is that part of the discomfort for me has been the friction of recognising that I am working with this client against those ideas of how a counsellor should be [that is, silent], and my uncertainty about [my doing] that. I needed time to think about it to become clearer on my own position. I'm also realising that what was causing the [questions] - "What am I doing? Am I being unethical here? Am I being directive?" and all the rest [of the questions] - is the positioning that those particular theories would place me in.

Maureen was joined with a community of concern through the locating of the dilemma in terms of truths about practice. This was a significant moment in a larger story where, in the community of concern, Maureen came to produce herself as a storying counsellor, clearer about the genesis of the story lines on which she might call and clearer about her own preferences. *With each decision I have made, my own preferences have become clearer to me*, she said.

Although I have not directly shown it here, Maureen was able to go on to authorise her interest in working beyond her client's stated agenda: in community she found

the authority to have a voice as counsellor in constructing a counselling agenda. She said that in the listening position the team's use of the word *transparent* was helpful in naming what she had been already doing in *telling him my position.* The earlier construction of the dilemma as *ethical* remained, for Maureen had been watchful of her use of power in the counselling relationship. However, Maureen now had available to her alternative ways of understanding a counsellor's use of power. The team and the supervisor had extended to her the invitation to responsibility that she had been unsure about extending to her client. Maureen had had the opportunity to test out what different relational positions offered her for her practice. In this way she was engaged in negotiating professional identity on terms that she had tested out with a professional community of concern. The production of identity is in public and social action.

Epistemology talk in producing professional identity stories

I have used this practice instance in two different presentations to professional audiences, to illustrate the emphasis on a metaphor of supervision as *storying*, an approach to supervision where a counsellor is a purposeful storier of their practice in relation with professional truths. I have used it to argue that a storying counsellor is well positioned to answer calls about safe and ethical practice. I will take that claim further to say that I think a storying counsellor is better positioned than an *instructed* counsellor, for they have engaged with evaluation of the practice truths they are employing. Their location in the texts they produce in and about counselling is visible to them. They have grappled with ideas and taken responsibility for the positions they take in relation with the profession and the community, and within particular moral orders. Those more familiar with supervision as instructional method have raised the question of whether this supervision (Extract 10.4), this process, ensured safe and ethical practice. To answer those queries, I look to the effects of the positioning offered Maureen by the metaphor of a storying counsellor who is agentive in producing practice. The effects of giving an account in supervision were made visible in Research Meeting Three when Maureen spoke about the cumulative effect for her of such conversations over the year:

There have been themes that have recurred in the supervision that I've had here, and that's speaking of issues that I was at the cutting edge of, in terms of just trying to come to terms with them and figure out where I fit.

So that self-reflective deconstructing and meaning-making, I've found really, really valuable, in terms of getting a sense of my particular brand, if you like, of working.

Some of the questions that have been put to me this year have made me have to decide which side of the fence, or whatever, just to make decisions. And so with each decision, I've made, then, I guess my own practice, and my own biases, or whatever you like to call them, my own preferences have become clearer to me.

I suggest that Maureen was saying that the supervision in which she had participated had supported her to find a subject*ive* position, as author of her counselling practice, through supervision conversations such as those in Extract 10.4 above. She had been called to account for the ideas that were producing her practice, through being engaged in epistemology talk, through looking at the positions offered her within particular counselling discourses, and through looking at what the effects of those locations and actions from those locations were. In supervision, epistemology talk is in effect about the ethics and morality of our practice. In using such talk for storying we are asking about the connections between ideas and practices: where do I stand and what does it mean that I stand there and what am I standing there in relation with? What practices do these ideas produce? If I practice in this way, what ideas am I depending upon and reproducing? Is this what I prefer in my practice? How have I come to prefer this? What other ways of being that I prefer does this make links with? What values am I bringing forward in my work, and what ethical and moral stances am I thus producing and reproducing?

These are questions in dialogue with which we account for our professional practice. They are professional *identity* questions; they both account for and produce our practice. To account for our professional practice - to *profess* - is to take up the responsibility of claiming to be a professional counsellor. To employ the storying

metaphor in relation with professional identity claims in supervision is to emphasise the significance of narrative coherence, the significance both of internal resonance within an account and of cultural resonance with other accounts. In a professional community of concern Maureen was supported to produce an account of her practice that she could test out for its narrative coherence. The client-centred account that had offered Maureen a language that described her concerns about violence in terms of *crusading* and *being oppressive* of her client no longer had coherence with her interest in a different version of responsible and ethical practice. For an account that constructed her action as *crusading* and *being oppressive* offered Maureen no position within which she might negotiate with her client to inquire about the effects of violence. However, the notions of *transparency* and *taking a position* offered Maureen language with which to engage in refining her storying of her possible responsibility as a counsellor to include violence in the counselling agenda. Again I notice the contrast with the notion of case conceptualisation that suggests a 'case' can be conceived of independently of what one professes. To the contrary, I argue that to construct a story about a particular piece of work, we are calling on what we profess, we are calling on and calling forth the accounts by which we story our own professional identities, and we are calling on professional and cultural stories. In storying our practices, we produce our practices. In storying our professional identities in supervision, we produce those identities.

In this example, Maureen's professional story is captured, in my research story, at a moment in time as she explored the possibilities for her and her practice of a migration of her professional identity. Maureen spoke of her preferences having become clearer to her; she was now more strongly positioned to profess, and so to know where she was standing in instances of practice that involved negotiating counselling agendas with her clients or in responding responsibly to violence.

In suggesting that Maureen was exploring the possibilities in a migration of professional identity, I am drawing on the metaphor that I used to describe my own moves into identifying myself as a practitioner of narrative therapy. The metaphor is useful to point to the effects for counsellors of asking ourselves to make the epistemological shift that working with constructionist thinking involves. We shift ourselves out of the ways of thinking about and speaking of ourselves and others that

have been familiar, and that continue to be familiar in the everyday and professional worlds around us. We leave old certainties for positions where we cannot but grapple with ideas. And, even as the new becomes more familiar, those ways with which we were previously surrounded continue their call, as the whole world has not made the migration with us. We continue to be constituted through many discourses (Davies, 1991). I argue that supervision is most of all a forum in which we grapple with ideas, in which we work to locate ourselves relationally in professional community, and where we take seriously, as Maureen suggested, the ethics of our practices.

In Extract 10.4 the team's questions helped Maureen to locate the dilemma presented to her by an instance of practice in terms of professional cultural stories, and offered her sense-making opportunities that centred the dilemma in terms of those stories. We see here in practice the team working from the positions Anne worked to articulate.

> It's not like directly confronting personal meaning in a judgmental way: It's grappling with the ideas; [...]; it's space for conversation [...].

The work of this chapter

This chapter has focused on reflecting team supervision as relational practice. It has shown the team at work in a dialogical and relational evaluation of professional knowledge, and in an exploration of epistemological positions. The chapter has demonstrated approaches to inquiry about practice and to making claims about practice that were neither disembodied nor personally focussed: rather, these approaches were produced as discursive and relational. The reflecting team, as a professional community of concern, has been shown to be a site where supervision produces counselling practice through conversations that situate a counsellor in professional discourse: the public and social nature of professional identity becomes apparent.

Liz, in Supervision 19, described how the reflecting team work had assisted her to grow a sense of herself in professional community.

Yeah, I think it's kind of, like; you come up with that expression, 'lives more richly described' [White, 1995], but it seems like [this process invites] a fuller experience of what I know; that if I only draw on my own voice, that's far more limiting if I've only got my own voice to draw on. But I know that I've got your voice to draw on, Clare, and Kate's and Kathie's, and Anne's, and everyone here, as well as the voices of the people at work that I draw on, with me [in my work].

Chapter Eleven

Constructionist supervision: Making claims for difference

Introduction

This chapter investigates two particular questions that were raised by the reflecting team project as they arise out of some of the more challenging aspects of the data texts. These questions focus on aspects of difference, both within our group and from traditional supervision practices. The questions are addressed here as practical questions about the tools available to us in storying our professional lives.

Initially the chapter explores the group's production of the metaphor of celebration. This counter practice to the familiar problem-focus of supervision provided opportunity for the storying of pleasing therapeutic events. As an alternative story of supervision practice the celebration metaphor was not without problems, however, and this chapter shows the group grappling with the implications of different voices producing different theories for practice. In its first focus, the chapter illustrates some of the tensions of the location of the project in both the local counselling community and constructionist practices: that focus shows the group working to navigate towards common points of dialogue in understanding how the celebration metaphor might be played out in our practices. This description draws on Research Meeting and Review conversations. It is followed by an instance of practice where a counsellor introduced a celebration agenda, and went on to story further her professional identity in the light of a pleasing event in her practice. This work illustrates the possibilities for professional identity-talk produced in storying a pleasing event in practice. A second instance of practice where a counsellor offered a celebration agenda provides a contrast and raises some particular theoretical questions about the storying of professional identity and practice. These questions focus on the position of the storying professional subject in supervision and so once again speak in terms of ethics and responsibility. This instance of practice also provides an opportunity for me to suggest that supervision is an appropriate forum in which counsellors might story the pleasures (as well as the struggles) of their work.

The celebration metaphor: A provisional tactic for storying

The metaphor of celebration in supervision was used by members of the group as a provisional tactic that worked to subvert the taken-for-granted discursive practice of supervision as problem-focussed. To celebrate an instance of practice is to take a very different position from that position produced by the *they'll put me right* discourse, or the *reporting in and checking up* discourse, for example. And in this way the metaphor might be seen as having been taken up to produce an alternative strengths-focussed set of discursive practices for supervision.

However, it seemed that the celebration metaphor somehow slipped into the vernacular of the research project without a great deal of examination of what it might mean. By Research Meeting One the term had been used frequently by some members, and for the first time came under some scrutiny. Kate had been speaking about a contrast between exploring *the positive* and *the negative* when Liz responded by drawing some distinctions.

> One thing, like the celebration, when you talk about 'the positive', the celebration comes from the self-reflection on what there is to celebrate or what has worked well, rather than that idea of someone else saying, "Haven't you done well".
>
> Yes, it is a quite different sense of 'positive'. [...] And I think that is what the reflective process that we have been doing allows, that sort of reflection around what is going well.

Liz was advocating for the counsellor's authority in the exploration of pleasing events and the meanings of those events, for the counsellor as story*ing* rather than stor*ied*. Later that same meeting, when we were discussing our understandings of a constructionist supervision, Anne drew a further distinction, noticing that speaking about celebration ran the risk of becoming a new imperative. Anne advocated that the counsellor be consulted about whether celebration was appropriate at all.

> I also like to have a [supervision] context where those things [practice struggles] can be acknowledged without having to find something to celebrate in them.

Anne and Liz were both working to take their readings from a constructionist map. According to their readings, the location of authority is important if celebration was not to be reproduced as instrumental practice, dependent upon a positive/negative binary or upon supervisor assessment of what is pleasing.

Dialogising the celebration metaphor

Efforts to disengage the presentation and storying of abilities from instrumental practice recurred a number of times, presenting more explicitly in Research Meeting Three as participants spoke carefully about different understandings. At that meeting I interviewed Clare and Kate together, while Liz and Anne listened together. Then, Liz and Anne joined me in an interview to which Clare and Kate listened. The process was then repeated. During the first interview Clare was speaking about her approach to supervision:

> I think one of the things that this group has given to me, as a supervisor, is a new sense of the importance of celebrating; and so some of the selection [I do as a supervisor] is about being directive in terms of asking them [counsellors in supervision] to choose something to celebrate with me. And I think sometimes there are things to celebrate that perhaps the counsellor isn't recognising.
>
> Because they're so caught up in perhaps the problem around their work with the client that they've brought in, they haven't seen the celebration that's there, then I think I have a responsibility to be pointing that out, not just as something that I might enjoy doing, but that I have a responsibility to do that.

The discourse of supervisor responsibility had taken on a new emphasis in this speaking. It was here concerned with noticing counsellor competence, and drawing attention to it. In this way, supervisor responsibility had a sense of being a counter-cultural practice. The supervisor remained positioned as responsible for *pointing out*,

however. Now Kate took up the concern Liz had expressed earlier, that celebration was a matter for counsellor authority rather than supervisor authority.

> That idea of celebration - I would see, rather than an authoritative role, I would see the role [of the supervisor] as one that drew out the strengths of the things to celebrate in the work, not necessarily by [the counsellor] presenting something to celebrate, but by presenting anything.

Kate was suggesting that whatever a counsellor presents, the supervisor might investigate strengths. She countered Clare's interest in *pointing out* with a suggestion of *drawing out*. *Drawing out strengths* distinguishes between a celebration charted against *instrumentality* and one that involves *storying practice*. Then the term, *celebration*, was itself destabilised a little in Clare's hedging, *if I can call it that*, as she continued:

> I think one of the really interesting things about the celebration sort of model, if I can call it that, is that it allows you to look at <u>all</u> of your work in a different way. Whereas, to begin with, I think if someone had said, "There'll be quite a large focus on celebrating", I would have thought, "Well, hold on a minute, that's all very well, but there's other aspects that need to be attended to, and maybe those will be pushed away if there's too much celebration". And I guess what's happened for me is a shift in recognising that, while <u>all</u> of my work needs to be attended to, having a celebration focus does help to attend to the aspects that perhaps aren't ready for celebration yet [that is, the counsellor has not identified them as matters for celebration] but [they] are still working.

They are still working: Clare drew attention to the idea that even where work is being brought for development aspects of that work might be identified as pleasing or as *working*. There is a sense of reorientation from the discursive practices provided by supervision discourses such as *counsellor deficit* towards those provided by discourses of *capacity and competence*. Clare went on to elaborate on the effects she had experienced the celebration metaphor offering her:

Well just that; the power of positive reinforcement. It just energises and allows you to appreciate your strengths, and the things that you do in your own unique way perhaps, that give you that power of thought that, whatever I am presented with, in supervision or whatever, I have the ability to work with in a positive way.

Clare employed the familiar language, *positive reinforcement*, of a behaviourist text, to describe her experiences. This was one of the aspects of this conversation that Liz and Anne picked up when the interview shifted to them, from Kate and Clare. I present here an abbreviated sequence of Liz and Anne's conversation as they worked to expand and rework, to dialogise, the descriptions that were available to the conversation about celebration in supervision. In their efforts to speak inclusively of both behaviourist and constructionist texts they were working to keep dialogical space open.

Liz But I think the meaning often is not there when you come into the [supervision] room; it is developed in the [conversational] process. So I was thinking, when Clare was talking about celebration, that the celebration comes from the questioning, comes out of, develops <u>out</u> of the style of questioning, and deconstructing how the counsellor works, and, you know, asking, "What's brought this about?" and...

Anne Yeah, but <u>why</u> does it develop out of that?

Liz Because I think it's not <u>known</u>, or it's not on top, until the meaning is made.

[...]

Liz ... it's like drawing out the meaning that the counsellor makes; and if the counsellor makes the meaning of positive celebration then that's what it means, rather than the supervisor imposing the meaning of celebration.

[...]

Anne I was thinking of another word - because those terms, like 'positive reinforcement' doesn't fit at all for me - as the term that I would like to use to describe either the counsellor process or the supervision.

I like the term 'agency'. And I don't know if that's the right one.

[...]

> And a supervision process that, at times, brings to the fore ways that you <u>are,</u> that might have been invisible, or hidden, or not very clearly articulated, or not valued, ways that you are moving in the direction that you want to be. Yeah, it's more than positive reinforcement.
>
> It would be nice to find a word that wasn't, [to find a word] like, "preferred professional development", or "agentiveness" or something - that's what I'm casting around for.
>
> It's not like a supervisor patting someone on the back; it's that person [the counsellor] developing their preferred meanings.

What had been called celebration was now recast in terms of making meaning of preferred developments, a description that told a little more about what the activity constituted. Anne was *casting around* to locate the signifiers of a constructionist text that might help her make up a way of speaking that at the same time did not close out the possibilities that Clare had been trying to produce with the celebration metaphor, or the theoretical reference point of *positive reinforcement.* However, Anne did navigate in a constructionist direction, since the terms available within the behaviourist psychology text did not do the work she was looking to have words to do. And steering a constructionist course was a declared purpose of the project's investigation of the implications of the narrative metaphor for counselling supervision.

A second story present here tells of the complexity I invited for myself and for us all in locating the research in both social constructionism and local supervision practice. With that dual focus, how might we find ways of speaking about difference that were not excluding, or inappropriately demarcating? To find such ways is not an easy task. Particularly, it is not easy when difference is more visible to some than it is to others, or when particular language uses are understood differently. The struggles we encountered in the project are reflected in tensions around speaking to distinctions, implicit and explicit in the literature and in practice communities. For example, there are the protests at what some have experienced as painfully divisive practices (Bacigalupe, 1998; Doan, 1998, 2000; Stagoll, 2000) when distinctions have been

drawn about narrative approaches. And at the same time the literature shows the careful drawing of distinctions about *their* work by those who present their activity as *drawing distinctions* (Bird, 2000; White, 1995, 1997, 2001) rather than speaking to exclude.

My point is that there is huge complexity in this matter of drawing distinctions in speaking in negotiation of professional identity and in negotiation of the descriptive tools we use for this speaking, the phenomena, landmarks, ideas, professional knowledges and reference points we use. Who has the naming and storying 'rights' in respect of these markers and descriptive tools that we employ, and that we each employ differently? How are such speaking 'rights' produced? And how do these markers and tools serve us? Do they speak for us; do they categorise us; do they require us to be unchanging; do they judge us or others and include or exclude us (in the manner of the scientific model); or do they serve as that in relation with which we come to have a sense of ourselves because of our engagement with the stories they offer us about ourselves?

> Every word is double-voiced for it is said [...] with a glance to the other (Bahktin, 1981, p.221).

The use of the *celebration* metaphor resounds with echoes of the complexity of the tasks of working to maintain possibilities for dialogue and multiple description particularly when the group was not "theoretically aligned" (Lowe and Guy, 1996).

As the Research Meeting continued, Kate and Clare's return to the interview positions saw Clare pick up this conversation, and comment on the textual reference points she was employing and the work she understood those reference points to be doing.

> I was interested when Anne raised the question around the positive reinforcement, and her not kind of liking the wording of that so much, and you had made a comment that we borrow words from other places.
>
> And I was thinking, too, that the notion of positive reinforcement came from my psychology base, which was my first degree. [...] And yet it does fit,

> because for me it's about this model of working, reinforcing my work in a positive way, which strengthens it and allows it to grow.

Clare was here re-interpreting the reference point, and like Anne trying to negotiate understanding in the spaces between the reference points constructionist and behaviourist texts asserted. I asked Clare about where she understood the authority for reinforcing her work to lie, and she went on,

> The reinforcement for me comes from the process, not from any person in particular, from the process and the way of thinking. Not from an authority; like we become the authority, including myself.
>
> In this context, that reinforcement has been shared. And part of what I go away with from here is the ability to do that more for myself.

In the spaces between, the interest that the group had taken and developed in what I call the storying of preferred developments in our work had been articulated with some sort of shared understanding of the kinds of author-ity and agency that I understand constructionist supervision to be working to produce. Clare's words invoked the authority of the community of concern engaged together in co-storying our work - *we become the authority* - and the author-ity of a counsellor who professes, who offers an ethical account of their work that is productive of ongoing ethical work.

Having worked to navigate towards a common point of dialogue we were now charting roughly the same course, although the nuances of understanding offered by different theoretical stories meant that there were alternative understandings for how the sails should be trimmed. I do not want to suggest that all difference needs to be collapsed into approximate sameness, nor that all not-constructionist texts should be set aside. Rather, I am wanting to demonstrate the struggle we encountered to story the processes that were generated by what Bird (2000, p.131) has since called "presenting our abilities", or by inquiry about preferred developments in a counsellor's practice, practices which all participants spoke of valuing. I do not think, however, that the celebration metaphor is sufficiently descriptive of the possibilities these storying practices offer. Nonetheless, it was a provisional tactic that gave us

Extract 11.1. Storying professional identity: A counsellor's celebration agenda

Beth is counsellor and Raewyn is supervisor in Supervision 4. Cindy is a team member.

Phase One

Beth Okay, there's a couple of things that I had wanted to bring to supervision. [...] There's some celebration stuff that I want to talk about briefly to begin with. And then there's two other things that are a bit of a concern to me.

And the celebration stuff, to begin with, is really about narrative. As you are aware I didn't train in narrative, but I'm beginning to take some of that on board in my work. And I have had two situations lately with clients, where it's been amazing.

...

... and it just suddenly occurred to me. You know how when you are with someone there's this, "I think I know what will work really well here". It was about, it was externalising the situation...

It felt like a magic session and it wasn't hard work in the slightest. We were both buzzing...

Raewyn

So having sort of experienced those two ... examples of how narrative might work, does that make you more inclined, I was wondering how that impacts on your counselling style? You said you weren't trained in narrative.

Beth It does make me think more about it [narrative]. I guess the issue - like I don't doubt its power - but the thing with me with not having trained in it is that I have this idea that narrative works with some people and not with others, and I need to explore that idea some more.

[...] I guess a concern that I had about narrative in the beginning was the focus on the alternative story and not giving voice to the problem story. My concern is that sometimes if you focus on the alternative story, the pain around the problem story won't get adequately acknowledged.

opportunity to investigate the possibilities of alternative supervision practices during the life of the project.

Employing a celebration agenda

On the basis of my interest in the co-construction of supervision I had analysed the transcript-texts for the ways in which the supervision agenda was presented and negotiated. I had looked at how supervisors and counsellors began their work: I considered the counsellor's presentation of their supervision interest; the supervisor's response; and what came to be produced as the agenda. Of course, negotiating an agenda was at times an ongoing process through the conversation, rather than something that happened at the beginning and remained unchanged, and negotiation occurred directly and indirectly. The preceding discussion showed the contesting of how an agenda that included the storying of preferred developments might be produced: Clare saw it as her responsibility as a supervisor to *point out* and Kate suggested that the supervisor would *draw out strengths*. By what authority is celebration deemed appropriate, we were asking, the supervisor's or the counsellor's? In Supervision Four the counsellor spoke of celebration when she introduced her agenda as the supervision conversation began. What were her intentions in offering this agenda and what was she hoping for? What was inside the word *celebration*? What kinds of conversation did *celebration* make possible? That instance of practice is now explored for the first person speaking positions the counsellor came to take up, and for the storying of professional identity that she thereby engaged in.

Extract 11.1. Storying professional identity: A counsellor's celebration agenda

Beth is counsellor and Raewyn is supervisor in supervision 4. Cindy is a team member.

Beth began supervision in this way:

> Okay, there's a couple of things that I had wanted to bring to supervision. [...] There's some celebration stuff that I want to talk about briefly to begin with. And then there's two other things that are a bit of a concern to me.

Perhaps the juxtaposition of *celebration* and *concern* signals the transgressive nature of a counsellor bringing to supervision her pleasure in developments in her work. Beth

Phase Two

Cindy I was thinking, what sort of things have enabled Beth to have worked in a different paradigm, and to have stretched herself, and to consider narrative approaches. What, I was really interested in what that might say about her as an enquirer...

Phase Three

I'm aware that talking about what it is that I do, the way that I work, that there's nothing really that fits at the moment. It [my work] doesn't belong within any particular category; or I don't feel I have the right to say I do 'narrative'.

I certainly do narrative more than most people do that I trained with, and I feel like, in a way, I "think narrative" because of the political philosophy behind it, but there's a discomfort for me at the moment around, what can I say about how I work. I feel like in a way I am between things.

...

How will I know when I can say to someone, "I work from a narrative model"?

noted that the celebration would be talked about *briefly*: perhaps this was a signal that the transgression would be relatively minor.

There are many explanations we could give for why counsellors and supervisors are more likely to put points of struggle and stuckness on the supervision agenda, than they are to put appreciative investigation on the agenda. Supervision is produced as a discourse practice of professional-self improvement where we oversee counselling practice: the Code of Ethics requires that we monitor our work. As I argued in Chapter Four, counsellors are not exempt from the effects of the self-regulation and surveillance that the examination and the confessional have offered. Bird (2000) wrote of the effects of the "pathologising self-gaze" as counsellors reflect on their work, a gaze that would have them being self-critical. Bird noted, too, her experience that women therapists, in particular, struggle to present their abilities. McWilliam, writing of feminist research, also made the point that women are "much less practiced in textual performances that interrogate pleasure, including the pleasure of our own research, writing and teaching" (1997, p.221). Likewise, I suggest, to use supervision to interrogate the satisfactions or pleasures of our counselling work is to transgress, and to produce both our professional selves and the discourse of supervision differently, and in less practised ways. Beth's work here represents the research group experimenting with a possibility for refusing - *resisting, subverting and changing* (Davies, 1991, p.51) - the discourse of supervision as problem-talk, through her use of the celebration metaphor. I was interested in what this refusal made possible.

Beth continued her introduction:

> And the celebration stuff, to begin with, is really about narrative. As you are aware I didn't train in narrative, but I'm beginning to take some of that on board in my work. And I have had two situations lately with clients, where it's been amazing.

Beth went on to give a few sparse details to locate the first practice instance, and went on to say,

> … and it just suddenly occurred to me. You know how when you are with someone there's this, "I think I know what will work really well here". It was about, it was externalising the situation…
>
> It felt like a magic session and it wasn't hard work in the slightest. We were both buzzing…

Continuing, Beth said that she and her client had subsequently encountered each other outside counselling, and her client had said to her that "'that session was amazing last week, I have just really moved'". Beth went on to speak of the subsequent and final counselling meeting with her client, when her client had spoken of "how powerful the externalising had been".

This talk appears to be constructing supervision as a site in which to identify and name and acknowledge pleasing events in practice, and in this instance pleasing events that Beth had produced by extending her practice through the use of an externalising conversation. The authority of Beth's client, as an audience to the counselling work, was also invoked.

There are a number of possible readings of this story about Beth's supervision agenda. A discourse analytic reading suggests that a project produced as a constructionist project, a project at that time called "Narrative approaches in supervision", had called Beth into a position that invited or perhaps required her to locate herself in relation with the narrative metaphor. That reading would suggest that in order to position herself favourably in a 'narrative' discourse, Beth was called by the relational power of the project's location to produce herself on the project's terms. A 'narrative' discourse called Beth to throw her hat into its ring in order to be a member of the group, with the effect that she reproduced that discourse's pre-existing discursive practices, such as telling favourable rather than problem stories of her practice. By this account, Beth was demonstrating already some adeptness at finding her way about in discursive practice she said she had not been trained to perform but which the group's location made available to her.

A 'narrative' reading of these practice events suggests that Beth was storying her professional identity. Beth had here given the beginnings of an account in the landscape of action, in telling of practice events in which she had been agentive in producing effective and pleasing counselling work through employing externalising practices. That account, on the landscape of action, would then be more richly described by continuing the telling, interweaving these events on the landscape of action with the meanings of those events, for Beth's professional identity, produced in the landscape of identity.

As the supervision continued, Raewyn went on to ask Beth about the effects for her ongoing practice of her experiences with externalising practices in these instances she had sought to celebrate:

> So having sort of experienced those two … examples of how narrative might work, does that make you more inclined, I was wondering how that impacts on your counselling style? You said you weren't trained in narrative.

Raewyn thus invited Beth to investigate the meanings of these particular events for her professional identity. In response, Beth spoke further of her interest in and concerns about narrative ways of working, saying:

> It does make me think more about it [narrative]. I guess the issue – like I don't doubt its power – but the thing with me with not having trained in it is that I have this idea that narrative works with some people and not with others, and I need to explore that idea some more.
>
> […] I guess a concern that I had about narrative in the beginning was the focus on the alternative story and not giving voice to the problem story. My concern is that sometimes if you focus on the alternative story, the pain around the problem story won't get adequately acknowledged.

Beth appears here to have taken a position as a critical evaluator of narrative practices. The celebration metaphor had opened a clearing in supervision where Beth could take a

position to speak of her practice and professional identity in relation with the narrative metaphor. Beth had identified one of the restraints on taking up narrative practice - *the idea that narrative works with some people and not with others* – and had decided to investigate that idea further. The identification of another restraint, *concern that pain won't be adequately acknowledged*, thickened the story of the ambivalence of Beth's positioning. Thus, the celebration metaphor was authorising, for it made particular conversation possible, legitimate. Beth was investigating possible positions for herself in a narrative therapy discourse, and asking about the effects of taking up such positions. She could be seen as investigating a possible migration of professional identity.

In Phase Two the team went on to join Beth with inquiry about the meanings of these practice events for her professional identity. Cindy asked:

> I was thinking, what sort of things have enabled Beth to have worked in a different paradigm, and to have stretched herself, and to consider narrative approaches. What, I was really interested in what that might say about her as an enquirer…

In the Phase Three conversation when Beth and Raewyn responded to the team's reflections to the team's reflections, Beth continued speaking of her positioning in relation with a narrative metaphor.

> I'm aware that talking about what it is that I do, the way that I work, that there's nothing really that fits at the moment. It [my work] doesn't belong within any particular category; or I don't feel I have the right to say I do 'narrative'.
>
> I certainly do narrative more than most people do that I trained with, and I feel like, in a way, I "think narrative" because of the political philosophy behind it, but there's a discomfort for me at the moment around, what can I say about how I work. I feel like in a way I am between things.

She went on to ask the question,

Beth's work here in storying her professional identity echoes with Rosenbaum and Dyckman's description of the "living shores" of the boundaries we use in self-identity descriptions.

> In our tellings we must give self-identity boundaries. ... Our boundaries must rather reflect living shores, where sea and winds constantly change the form of cliffs and cove, inlets and jutting rocks. Boundaries are always expressed in action. (Rosenbaum & Dyckman, 1996, pp.269-270)

In the actions of telling, Beth had been expressing some self-identity boundaries, boundaries that arose out of being in relationship with other professionals and with professional knowledge. Earlier in this chapter I showed Liz and Kate arguing that it is for the counsellor to decide which are the meaningfully pleasing events in their practice. Here, Beth was the agent in and of a professional identity story as she located her work in relation with narrative practice, having earlier differentiated between *taking some techniques* and working with *a narrative philosophy*. As the storying subject Beth was telling an agentive-self story in relation with practice knowledge. The "vocabulary of action" (Gergen, 1996, p.22) she was employing appeared to posit the storying of professional identity as a first person account of relational practice. The first person account Beth offered appeared to be an important tool in storying her professional identity as her supervision agenda, of celebrating pleasing events in her practice, was taken up. Just as in narrative therapy events in a person's life are investigated for the identity stories they offer, so in supervision events in professional practice are explored for the professional identity stories they produce. Living out those professional identity stories a storying counsellor then goes on to produce further action.

However, my easy assumptions about a storying subject telling a first person account were unsettled by an instance of practice that followed soon after this one, when a similar supervision agenda was introduced by a counsellor, but a quite different account was produced. This latter instance raised for me questions about the

Extract 11.2. The speaking subject and first person accounts in supervision

In Supervision 7 Val is the counsellor, and I am the supervisor.

Val Well I thought, given a of couple things I've said recently about noticing how I always bring problems to supervision, it would be really good to start off with a celebration. But there is a challenge I would like to talk about as well.

...

So I've been working with narrative with her, and just really seeing how fantastic narrative is, in terms of, well, in terms of working with sexual abuse but in terms of re-storying. Like it's really showing me the power of narrative.

...

Well, a number of things. Like, in the curiosity, like a lot of her ideas herself have actually come from sexual abuse therapy, and from books. And so, in the curiosity about, in deconstructing some of these ideas, she's disputing her own...

Me I'm sitting here with a curiosity about, you know, I'm hearing you giving lots of credit to narrative ideas. And I'm wondering what it is about the way you've used them in particular that you are wanting to celebrate?

Val I think the fact that I'm just hanging in there and using it [curiosity]. And I guess that one of the things that I celebrate is that, yeah, is that I'm holding on to it.

...

Me What would it mean for this client to know that this work you've done with her is so meaningful [to you]?

Val Yes, for me or for her? For me.

Me Well, I was thinking, what would it mean to her if she knew that this work's been so meaningful for you in your story of yourself as a counsellor who works with narrative?

Val Yes. I haven't explored that, except for the spontaneous feedback towards the end of a session, but no, I haven't told her.

.....

significance of a first person account as the vocabulary of action used by an agentive subject in the accounting and warranting conversations of supervision. I turn now to introduce this contrasting instance of practice.

Extract 11.2. The speaking subject and first person accounts in supervision

In Supervision 7 Val is the counsellor, and I am the supervisor.
I am selecting to make my participation in this instance transparent, since transparency serves a discussion of the theoretical questions this instance has raised.

Val had joined Beth as a speaker of the celebration metaphor in Supervision 5 when, in the Phase Four conversation, she commented that her practice had always been to present *problems*, rather than *celebrations* in supervision. Val then began Supervision 7 saying:

> Well I thought, given a of couple things I've said recently about noticing how I always bring problems to supervision, it would be really good to start off with a celebration.

Val's introduction created a clearing in which she could enter into celebration-talk: she drew on a series of events that had occurred over time to give coherence to her claim to produce a celebration agenda, and she drew on earlier conversation which supported the legitimacy of that agenda - *a couple of things I've said recently*. The juxtaposition of the transgressive supervision practice of speaking appreciatively of one's work alongside the usual supervision practice of presenting concerns echoed from Beth's introduction in supervision 4, as Val continued,

> But there is a challenge I would like to talk about as well.

Val went on to explain briefly that she was working with a woman who had previously had several years of intensive sexual abuse therapy which the client had found unhelpful and tiresome. She went on to say

Val Yes, much more fully that I'd imagined actually. I usually throw the celebration in and then get into the other stuff. No, that feels good.

> So I've been working with narrative with her, and just really seeing how fantastic narrative is, in terms of, well, in terms of working with sexual abuse but in terms of re-storying. Like it's really showing me the power of narrative.

Listening to the celebration Val was offering, I noticed the nominalisations of narrative in this account: *working with narrative, how fantastic narrative is,* and *the power of narrative*. I was concerned that when Val had wanted to celebrate her work, these nominalisations disguised (Hall, Serangi, & Slembruck, 1997) and obscured (Potter, 1996, p.182) Val's agency in her account and in her work. As she began Val appeared to be a support player in an account where narrative was at centre. This was perhaps another form of an "agentive self gap" (White, quoted in Winslade, Crocket, & Monk, 1997, p.70). As a counsellor I would then work in a number of ways to enlarge a clearing in which the speaking conditions supported a client to take a subjective position, to "draw connections between significant developments in people's lives and the sense of their own resourcefulness or competence that might result if they were to take seriously these achievements" (Winslade et al, p.70). I would be working to build dialogical space productive of agency (and I would not necessarily be transparent about my purposes). As a supervisor I had similar intentions; I wanted to make available to Val dialogical space where she could position herself *in* her speaking and in relation with narrative practices. There were a number of reasons for my preference: I took the position that effective and ethical counselling depends upon a counsellor's presence in their work *and* on the surface of the grammar of their account of that work. Val, rather than *narrative*, must take ethical responsibility for her work. As well, as an agent Val might be positioned to claim authority over and to go beyond the terms *narrative* offered. Moving carefully, I asked Val what it was that was powerful, and again I noticed that she was not present in the account, as she answered,

> Well, a number of things. Like, in the curiosity, like a lot of her ideas herself have actually come from sexual abuse therapy, and from books. And so, in the curiosity about, in deconstructing some of these ideas, she's disputing her own…

The story of Val employing curiosity was absent from Val's account. While there are arguments for the de-centring of the therapist (White, 1997) in counselling work, such

arguments do not propose the counsellor's absence from their own accounts of their work. Nor do they propose the centring of a nominalisation that sidelines the lived experience of a therapist in a story of preferred developments.

In retrospect, I might, like Liz, look back and prefer that I had asked Val what it was that she hoped we would do together in the celebration rather than assume, as I did, that we would follow Beth and Raewyn's practice and story the meaningfulness of the pleasing event for Val's professional identity story. Inquiry about the process that Val was looking to generate might have worked to establish a shared sense of the purpose of this celebration agenda. Without such inquiry we struggled somewhat to establish a space between us that was dialogical.

As Val continued to employ language that obscured her agency, I persisted in my attempts to invite her to investigate the meaningfulness of this pleasing counselling event for her understanding of her professional identity. However, Val remained in the shadows of *narrative* in her speaking. It was the *copying* of narrative that produced the work according to the account Val was offering; I took it as my task to offer inquiry that would make more visible in the story the *orginating* in which Val had engaged in her work with her client (Geertz, 1986; White, 1995). To offer the conversational space some difference, I opted then to make more visible the path through the clearing that I was working to open for Val to take, asking Val

> I'm sitting here with a curiosity about, you know, I'm hearing you giving lots of credit to narrative ideas. And I'm wondering what it is about the way you've used them in particular that you are wanting to celebrate?

Again, looking back I would now prefer that I had asked Val if this inquiry interested her too. In this way I would have been offering Val dialogical partnership through negotiation in constructing a way forward for the conversation. However, that was not what I said at the time.

My use of the second person pronoun offered Val a path to a position where she might speak as the agent who had produced an interest in celebration. The use of *you*

highlighted the location in the text that Val might take up as a first person teller. Val took up this position, now inserting herself as the subject of the sentence.

> I think the fact that I'm just hanging in there and using it [curiosity]. And I guess that one of the things that I celebrate is that, yeah, is that I'm holding on to it.

Is the subjective position that Val now took up - *I'm holding on* - a preferred authorial position in an account of one's professional practice? Clearly, that is the position I am arguing. However, as this instance of practice is showing it is not an unproblematic position that I am taking. I am arguing that the narrative metaphor invokes a storying supervision, and that to be professional is to profess, to story our practice in relation with professional knowledge in a first person account. By this account, counsellors are active navigators of relationships with professional knowledge rather than media for the practice of professional knowledge. Just as we cannot somehow practise counselling independent of a relationship with professional knowledge, Professional Knowledge does not practise counselling without the actions of counsellors constructing our practices.

> [Knowledge] lives only through its agents, who themselves employ ideas and techniques selectively as their tasks and perspectives dictate. (Freidson, 1986, p.217)

Because of the position of privilege we have as counsellors, it behoves us, I suggest, to articulate in supervision those places in the clearing where we stand in our work with clients, and the actions we take in constructing our practices. And I want to claim, and then to qualify this claim, that we cannot but be the subjects of our own sentences as we profess what we stand for and what we stand in relation with.

As Val's and my conversation continued I worked to find other tools to offer to the storying of the meaningfulness of this pleasing event in Val's practice. I did this in recognition of the restraints that there appeared to be on Val taking a subjective position in the storying. I was looking to extend the storying resources on which we had to call. I wondered if an inquiry that, rather than centring Val, focussed on the site

that had produced the developments Val had wanted to celebrate might offer resources for storying. A focus on the *counselling relationship* rather than the *counsellor* might offer an opening for and terms for an account where Val's agency in bringing forward preferred practices could be described on more substantial terms. Such a move would also offer to refocus the conversation from the nominalisation and reification of *narrative,* to an investigation of the specific instance of the *counsellor at practice*. I therefore invoked the presence of the client, who might speak with some authority as a witness to those aspects of her work Val had wanted to celebrate.

> What would it mean for this client to know that this work you've done with her is so meaningful [to you]?

With the benefit of hindsight I regret that once again I assumed Val's interest in my interest and did not ask her permission for this new direction in questioning.

My inquiry unsettled the conversation: its unfamiliarity left Val uncertain how to go on. Speaking very rapidly, Val expressed uncertainty about what I was meaning. In the uncertainty, however, she asked the question about the focus of the conversation that, as supervisor, I had been working to make visible. *For me*: Val could be present and visible in the account of her work.

> Yes, for me or for her? For me.

Although Val had answered her own question, I elaborated my request more fully, to make clearer the work I had wanted my question to do. In elaborating, I made an editorial re-description that located my question in the purpose I understood Val to have nominated for the supervision: *your story of yourself as a counsellor who works with narrative.*

> Well, I was thinking, what would it mean to her if she knew that this work's been so meaningful for you in your story of yourself as a counsellor who works with narrative?

Centred here were both the counselling relationship wherein Val had effectively expanded her experience of the effects of curiosity in her work, *and* an invitation to agency to Val in the storying of this practice. The repeated use of the second person pronoun - *you* in *your* story of *yourself* – illuminated Val's position as the agent of her practice, while the position offered Val as *a counsellor who works with narrative* emphasised Val's relation with that body of knowledge with which she was claiming connection. Val was positioned in this speaking in relation with her client and with narrative therapy. My intention was to make accessible to Val some resources for her to produce herself as storying in a discourse of supervision as making meaning of our practice.

However, what I did not yet understand was that while I was taking a position in a discourse of meaning-making, drawing on discursive practices that constructed supervision as storying (professional identity), a different discourse of supervision was producing Val's supervision practice. Rather than enlarging the clearing for Val to speak herself into authority, my inquiry worked to remove her further from an authoring position. For, on the terms offered by an instrumental supervision discourse, the inquiry served to call Val into a position of *not having done*. From this position, Val answered in terms of *why don't you try?* discursive practice.

> Yes. I haven't explored that, except for the spontaneous feedback towards the end of a session, but no, I haven't told her.

My words had invoked the authoritative voice of an expert supervisor produced within a discourse in which Val, as counsellor, was positioned as answerable to me for her actions on terms that I set rather than negotiated. The genre of supervision talk within which Val was positioned produced an orientation to a different voice (Fairclough, 1998, p.151) than the genre I had been assuming (without negotiation). An action-interrogative, reality-focussed supervision text constructed an orientation that produced my question as one of instrumentality rather than imaginary. Val became answerable for her actions or inactions in a fact-oriented account, and authority for the actions of her practice was not hers. The mode was indicative (fact telling) rather than subjunctive (possibility-producing) (Parry & Doan, 1994, p.188).

Thus far, my inquiries did not work to support Val in more richly storying the ways in which this work had been a *significant mark* as she navigated a path for her counselling work. The different ways of speaking we were employing, positioned in different versions of supervision discourse, often closed off the possibility for dialogue. As Val drew to an end the celebration, she suggested that the biggest part of this (pleasing) event was *just evidence of how exciting narrative is*. As I understood it Val was again in a position at the margins of her own account, and I felt concerned about the effects of the interdiscursive talking past each other that had occurred, and for which I had responsibility as supervisor in the power relation of supervision. I felt myself at risk of behaving instrumentally and of inappropriately policing conversational contributions (Fairclough, 1992, p.157), in my working to produce a clearing for the agentive speaking privileged in the supervision discourse out of which I was intending to produce my work. And I had not negotiated with Val what it was that she was looking for in the celebration that she had brought. Nor had I sought permission for my questions. As we ended this first part of the supervision, I asked if we had done any of what Val had hoped for in our conversation. Val answered

> Yes, much more fully that I'd imagined actually. I usually throw the celebration in and then get into the other stuff. No, that feels good.

It's clear to me now that my asking Val for some guidance from the beginning about how she had imagined we would engage in celebration could have produced a different conversation. Perhaps only I had had an interest in developing an account, and all my inquiry could be read as instrumental action. Val had anticipated *throwing in the celebration* but I did not understand the nature of her invitation to me. Was I doing what Paré calls "duplicating the impositional dynamics" (1999, p.3) of instrumental practice that in my interest in the counsellor as author I had been working to avoid? It is more than a little humbling to find myself asking such questions. This instance of practice has been very useful in making visible the struggles in navigating to shared understandings, to common points of dialogue, in sailing conditions where different currents meet and produce water that is difficult to read, and where texts offer different descriptions of the reference points, or similar descriptions of reference

points that are different. When different understandings of and familiarity with constructionism and narrative approaches worked invisibly behind the scenes of our speaking, our efforts to establish dialogical space were subverted. However, at the beginning of this chapter I have also shown the group, in Research Meeting Three, navigating towards a common point in dialogue. At that time the structure of the interview made the differences easier to negotiate as group members brought different understandings overtly to the surface of the talk. For example, distinctions were drawn between *pointing out* and *drawing out* aspects of the work that were pleasing.

Extracts 11.1 and 11.2 have been used to demonstrate counsellors taking up a counter position in bringing celebration agenda to supervision. The rich storying of professional identity that such an agenda offered was evident in Extract 11.1. That extract, too, showed the positioning of the counsellor as agentic in evaluating professional knowledge and in storying her practice in a first person account. I go on now to demonstrate the groups' later investigation of the practice in Extract 11.2 to show how we made sense of this interdiscursive moment of reaching for alternative practice. I begin by suggesting that the presentation of one's abilities in supervision produces the possibility of taking pleasure in our work.

Taking pleasure in our work

In this section I go on to explore the celebration metaphor further, suggesting that it was a provisional tactic used as we reached for alternative descriptions for the alternative practice of taking pleasure in our work and storying those pleasures in supervision.

In the second part of Research Meeting Two, I presented to the group some selections of transcript texts, and the video sequences from which they had been extracted. In the discussion that follows I draw on our conversations in Research Meeting Two, in particular our discussion of Val's and my conversation in Supervision 7 (Extract 11.2). I included this particular video sequence in Research Meeting Two because I was keen to understand how others might put together ideas about this celebration agenda. In particular I was interested in what others made of my invoking of an action-interrogative position for Val when I had intended to open space for a position in a supervision of the imaginary as I sought to invoke the voice of Val's client in

storying her celebration of her work. *How might it be if...,* I had intended to ask, as an invitation into the imaginary.

Val's words in Research Meeting Two, as we began watching the video and reading this from this (Supervision 7) excerpt, echo with the counter practice she had taken up in introducing a celebration agenda:

> It's risky stuff celebrating your work, Kathie.

What was the risk of which Val was speaking? Beth picked up the trangressive nature of such a presentation, in her (ironic) comment,

> And Val also said she was going to do some <u>real</u> [that is, problem focussed] supervision after that.

(Beth's introduction of the practice of presenting a celebration in Supervision 4 had used the same format: the presentation of both pleasing developments and concerns.)

Supervision texts are remarkably thin in references to pleasure: no authors include it in their lists of tasks and functions in supervision. The NZAC Code of Supervision (2000) says nothing about pleasure: supervision is an altogether more serious business. Perhaps the psychoanalytic conflating of pleasure and desire has removed the word from the professional lexicon (although it is in use in some academic poststructuralist work). I have noted already Bird's comment that women therapists struggle to present their abilities (2000 p.131), and McWilliam's comment that women scholars are not familiar with a focus on the pleasure of their own work (1997, p.221).

In Supervision 7 Val had transgressed by offering her work for celebration but there had been restraints on the development of the story of celebration that I wanted to understand. Stopping the tape after Val had said, *Yes, I haven't explored that, except for spontaneous feedback*, I said to Val that in reviewing the tape and transcript I had wished in retrospect that I more overtly invited her into imagination at that point. I was interested to know what had happened for her with my question and in her

subsequent interpretation of the conversation. How had my question worked to position her as having to account for what she had or had not done in the counselling? Val suggested

> I think probably I didn't hear your question as you asked it. I heard something else in the question. When I look back and reflect on the words that you used, I actually didn't take up the invitation to wonder about the meaning for her [my client]. I was actually looking at it more in the context of what I might or might not have done.

Val's comment picks up the interdiscursivity of that moment: supervision as meaning making and supervision as instructional method were both being produced in our work, each making a different call to Val. The invitation I had wanted to offer Val did not work to open dialogical space: the terms of its production had not been accessible, as Val had responded to a different call, *what I might or might not have done. Right practice* rather than *pleasure* is the language of dominant supervision discourse. Val went on to suggest

> For me to have heard that as a meaning-making question, I'd probably have had to have been warmed up to it, as I think I was on a roll, looking at how fast I was talking, and so I think probably I needed an intermediary bit between the question and what I was on a roll about.

The discursive practice that produced my speaking as an invitation into the imaginary, where pleasure might be spoken to, did not resonate for Val: she was not *warmed up* to it. She suggested that a clearer invitation to join a meaning-making supervision was needed - a supervision in terms of which, at this later time in the project, it now made sense to her to speak. The project had in this way offered Val terms to distinguish between supervision discourses. Earlier in this Research Meeting Val had spoken of another supervision process that she had encountered as a counsellor, one where the client is counselled via supervision. The counsellor is the medium for supervisor-directed interventions. Such supervision would have coached her as counsellor in what I had understood as absence from her account of her work. However, I had worked to disrupt that (marginal) positioning without negotiating with

Val her interest in the possibilities of other positions, or considering with her the effects of the absent-counsellor position. Without the negotiation of the terms of our speaking, instrumental practice was reproduced, and the opportunity was missed that might have produced a fuller story of Val's increasing dexterity in *holding on* to narrative practices.

Speaking now of *difficulty naming what I'm doing as good*, Val suggested that finding a position from which to story pleasing developments in her work was not easy, and she would have valued finding a position to do that at the time of Supervision 7. For us both echoes of other conversations had restrained the possibilities for the dialogical partnerships that we were seeking in order to explore a version of supervision as celebration. As well, the invisibility, in supervision discourse, of the performance of pleasure was a further restraint: the courses we might navigate were being made up as we spoke.

As we reviewed the video Anne suggested that it could have been helpful if I had been more transparent about my purposes, and transparent in disclosing my thinking about my thinking (Weingarten, 1992), as I asked the question. Perhaps I might have located a restraint in dominant gender stories. I might then, she suggested, have said something like:

> Why I'm asking these questions is because it's common practice for women, we've all been trained not to take our own credit to ourselves. [...] We're seen as big-headed, we're seen as "boastful and arrogant", and "not a nice woman" when we're like that.

The effect of this question might have been to relocate the site of inquiry, to make available to Val a conversation that spotlighted her positioning within gender discourse and made visible the restraints that were working behind the scenes of our speaking. In this way the suggestion might have offered a possible path to the clearing in which I was seeking to work with Val to build a first person speaking position from which she might story her pleasure in what narrative practices were making possible in her work. Such a question might have made available a dialogical space in which to inquire collaboratively about gender training and speaking oneself

into a subject position - if that had been an inquiry in which Val was interested. Val indicated at that point in Research Meeting Two that this inquiry, too, would have been of interest to her then, in Supervision 7.

Val and I had been speaking past each other, positioned in different supervision discourses. Supervision 7 and our discussion of it, at the time and in Research Meeting Two, were significant in our group's work to produce supervision otherwise than instrumental. For in this Review, differences in understanding were acknowledged at the surface of our talk. As well, in declaring a celebration agenda Val had begun a process to re-conceive supervision. She was grappling to produce positions for herself as counsellor other than as the reporter, the go-between between supervisor and client who reported to the supervisor what changes the client was making and was advised by the supervisor what might come next. Beyond instrumentality, the possibility of other possibilities was being generated. We had begun to ask if perhaps taking pleasure in one's work could be a legitimate supervision activity if appropriate language and discursive space could be made for its production.

Anne suggested that dominant gender discourse ensures that *'nice women' do not take credit for themselves.* Is *taking credit* a version of taking pleasure in our work? Dominant gender discourse might also ensure that women counsellors are not familiar with taking pleasure in their work. Dominant professional discourse might also suggest that ethical counsellors do not take pleasure in their work for it is serious and responsible work we do. If we are to monitor and develop our work and be supported in it, is there also room in supervision for stories of the pleasure we take in our work? The group's experimenting with *celebration* was a provisional tactic by which I have come to name the storying of the pleasure we take in our work as an important narrative thread in storying our professional identities in supervision. To speak of taking pleasure in our work is to take our work into a different genre of talk, a genre of rich conversation that leaves the *have you done/what I have done/what I have not done* discursive practices looking rather thin. In Chapter Four I argued that Gardner, Bobele, & Biever (1997, p.224) and Bernard and Goodyear (1998) underestimated storying possibilities in their assertions of a poverty of experience that those new to the field have to draw on in their professional self stories. I argue here that we might

all, however little or much professional experience we have, enrich our professional self stories in richly describing the pleasures of our work.

The supervision relationship, then, is a site for storying a rich variety of stories of professional identity. When we hold that professional stories are constitutive of professional selves, stories told in supervision of the pleasures of our work might well contribute to the enrichment of our work in ways that are both sustaining for us professionally and productive of responsible and ethical professional relationships. What could be more sustaining for a counsellor than a professional identity story that, while acknowledging the accounts of pain and struggle and injustice that we meet in our work, also tells of pleasure? Such stories would tell of the pleasure of the fine nuances of languaging which was not previously languaged, of delicate moments of producing relational connection, of moments resonant with rich understanding, or of robust and uplifting moments in our counselling conversations with those who come to us as clients. We might acknowledge for ourselves in such stories the crafting of our own practice that they represent. Such stories of pleasure are not stories only of ourselves in positions of star billing (Sampson, 1993, p.142) but rather stories of the co-created endeavours in which we take responsibility for the ethics of the counselling practices we produce.

Positions for storying professional subjects

In my presentation of Extract 11.2 I referred to the matter of the counsellor as a professional storying subject. I argued for counsellors taking a subjective position in speaking about their work, in supervision. Through this document I have worked to establish a claim that in supervision we are working to produce ourselves as professional counsellors and as responsible and ethical subjects. I have suggested that supervision is a site for the storying of professional identity, and that identity is expressed in a number of ways, including our speaking of ourselves *in relation with* professional knowledge and other knowledge. In Extract 11.1 I showed Beth as a storying professional subject: she was the subject of her sentences as she spoke about her work in relation with narrative practice. In Extract 11.2 I showed how without overt negotiation of the discursive practices that were producing our work, and so of the terms of our conversation, such a speaking position was not readily available to Val. My concern was that Val's agency was obscured in the telling: what did this

mean for the exercise of ethical and moral responsibility? For the use of the first person and the taking of an agentic position are cultural expressions of responsibility.

> One common use for the first person singular, in English, is to take responsibility, or to make a commitment. By using 'I' the speaker makes than commitment, as himself or herself. (Harré, 1999, p.102)

In Research Meeting Two Anne suggested that gender was a restraint on *taking credit* for one's practice. There may be other identities as well as gendered ones that are restraining of the taking of a first-person speaker in a professional-self narrative. Do self-narratives speak with most resonance to those whose cultural locations have their histories in western individualism, for example?

As a pakeha New Zealander I have been introduced to Maori understandings that identity is relational: on the marae and in other contexts, Maori speakers claim identity by naming the ancestral canoe, the river or sea, the mountain, and the ancestral chief that are the significations of identity. As I understand it, such identity markers offer turangawaewae, a place to stand. In the standing, and the speaking, in this place, this clearing, identity is both invoked and produced. Identity is claimed and produced through group (tribal) affiliation. What does this mean, then, for my argument that subjectivity is expressed through the professional speaking subject inserting themselves in the subject position of their sentences, if landmarks and collectivity invoke and produce identity? Am I at risk of practice that imposes one (dominant) set of cultural expectations upon another? I think, too, of other examples, that offer such interrogation of my argument, such as Ohye's (1998) distinction between the significance of individual voice in North American mothering and personhood, and the "eloquent and resonant" silence of Japanese mothering and a sense of collective identity. I have wondered if the oft-quoted Maori saying, "The kumara does not proclaim its own flavour" is roughly equivalent to the pakeha saying "Don't blow your own trumpet", or if the former is a more profound expression of the idea that a first-person narrative is not a preferred cultural expression, and that identity is expressed from a collective voice or from a relational position. Was Val's presentation of *the excitement of narrative* a way of using collectivity, her belonging to a narrative community of practice, to be productive of identity for her?

If this is the case a question might be asked about the expressions of subjectivity appropriate to the professional work of supervision. What forms of being, and being responsible, ethical and moral in our practices are available to us and legitimate in the work of counselling supervision?

To story one's professional practice is to take a position in actively exercising one's moral compass: it is to feel the focus of the light in the clearing in which one is standing and it is to rise in response to one's relational responsibilities. For counsellors, it is to understand the privilege and the power relations of counselling work, and it is to lift ourselves into visibility in the speaking we offer in responding to these responsibilities. Supervision is one of the sites in which we produce ourselves as responding to our relational responsibilities. We make our practice visible and rise to the call of our ethical responsibilities. My preference for a first person speaker of a self-narrative has been predicated on a number of cultural assumptions. There are problems with taking familiar cultural metaphors at face value.

> One of the most striking metaphors to describe our culture's personhood ideals derives from the notion of authorship. People are encouraged to take charge and become authors of their own life stories. To be a character in another's story is to have lost authority over one's own life.
>
> If textual authorship is considered central to our personhood ideal, either we need to find a better (more secure) metaphor or agree that our lives as well are more open-ended and fluid than we have heretofore found acceptable. (Sampson, 1985, p.1207)

Is there perhaps a difference between "taking charge" and acting as an author in one's life stories - or professional stories? I believe there is. Using Wernick's characterisation of contemporary culture as *promotional* culture Fairclough suggested that "self-promotion is becoming part-and-parcel of self-identity" (1995, p.140). Does the storying of professional identity in supervision, perhaps by the insertion of oneself into the subject position in one's sentences or through the use of some other metaphor that offers one visibility on the surface of the grammar one speaks, collapse

into another instance of "the colonizing spread of promotional discourse" (Fairclough, 1995, p.140)?

I want to argue a distinction between self promotion, taking charge, and the storying of professional-self narratives. For example, however much Val or Beth might have been working to take charge in producing a supervision agenda, their authorship was mediated, firstly by the voices of others: those who were speaking at the time, those who had spoken before in supervision, and those who would speak about supervision from a whole host of positions. Secondly their authorship of their stories of celebration was mediated by the positions they occupied in relation with those other speakers. For those voices worked to produce a location for those supervision conversations; they offered up particular spaces where Val and Beth might produce such agenda. The agenda, however, is not created simply by the spaces, nor by those voices, but by Val's and Beth's expressions of subjectivity in the spaces in relation with those voices. The storying of professional self is a storying of self-in-relation. Fairclough, drawing on Giddens, also suggested that "self-identity, rather than being a feature of given positions and roles, is reflexively built up through a process of negotiation" in post-traditional society, (1995, p.137). Professional self-identity, according to this account, is negotiated as a reflexive project: as Clare said, *We become the authority, including myself.* The accounting and warranting conventions of supervision can perhaps be produced only locally. The exercise of ethical and moral responsibility is a locally and culturally negotiated task. I suggest that in supervision counsellors assume the speaking positions that offer positions of ethical and moral responsibility negotiated as meaningful in the professional and cultural worlds they inhabit in their practices. The question, "How is ethical responsibility being taken?" may be much more useful than a unilaterally constructed insistence on a first-person account.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has extended two of the areas of the research group's work that had left me dissatisfied, as it seemed to me that they could be more complexly productive than they had been. I have taken the metaphor of celebration, and suggested it has paved the way for the storying work of supervision to include rich description of the pleasures of our work. I acknowledge that for many of us, trained within the terms of

discourses such as professionalism, gender, supervision-as-deficit-talk, there will be restraints to taking up the discursive practice of storying pleasure. At other times, it will simply not be appropriate. I am not, then, arguing a new orthodoxy that requires the presentation of pleasing work. Rather I want to use the telling of these instances of research and supervision practice to make less unusual the supervision practice the storying of our pleasure in our work. For, such practice offers an honouring of our clients and of our relationships with them, and of our own lives and relationships. When such practice also includes a negotiated and explicit invitation to the rich storying of professional identity, it also offers opportunity for a rich accounting of the ethical relation with that which we profess.

Chapter Twelve

Offering an account of supervision

Introduction

This project began by asking what the narrative metaphor as it is employed in counselling might mean for the practice of counselling supervision. In this inquiry I thus argue *for* employing an approach to therapy as a resource for an approach to supervision. This stance is counter to the current mainstream argument for supervision as a specialisation, different from counselling in content, purpose, and process (Carroll, 1996; Holloway, 1995; McConkey, 1999). However, I am not arguing to conflate counselling and supervision. Rather I am making some different connections and drawing some different distinctions than those put forward in recent mainstream accounts of supervision by those who have dissociated themselves from counselling model-related approaches to supervision. In the family therapy field the concept of isomorphism is a structural one that has offered ways of conceptualising the replication of various aspects of therapy in supervision (White & Russell, 1998). While the concept of isomorphism has been widely applied, indeed more widely than Liddle and Saba (1983) had recommended when they first used the notion, the transformations between counselling and supervision that I present here are argued on a different basis. I offer an account of what the narrative metaphor might make possible for supervision on the basis that there are critical areas of resonance between narrative approaches in counselling and the work of supervision. That resonance is in the realm of ethics and epistemology: the moral order in which the counselling is located is similar to the moral order in which the supervision is located.

In Chapters Seven to Eleven I have shown Anne and Clare and Kate and Liz and me together grappling with the implications of this resonance between supervision practice and counselling practice, sometimes hearing and interpreting with shared understanding and at other times caught up in interdiscursive moments of misunderstanding. In presenting instances of practice I have suggested that

supervision in a constructionist mode is produced as a site concerned with ethical and moral action. Action is interpreted from positions within moral orders whether we make that positioning or those orders explicit or not. I am arguing for a version of supervision that makes explicit our positioning within moral orders as part of a commitment to the ethics of respectful relationship in counselling practice. In an example I have shown Emma living out this commitment in the agenda she brought to supervision (Extract 8.2): Emma's agenda was to speak about her experiences of discomfort - frustration and irritation - in order to restore her counselling relationship to one of respect for her clients. In Extract 10.4 I showed the team supporting Maureen as she grappled with the implications of particular systems of practice, and the moral orders out of which they are produced, for the relationship she would offer her clients. She asked where and how she might position herself as a counsellor when working with a male client about issues of violence. In Research Meeting Three, Maureen spoke of the effects of this version of supervision:

> Some of the questions that have been put to me this year have made me have to decide which side of the fence, or whatever, just to make decisions. And so with each decision I've made, then, I guess my own practice, and my own biases, or whatever you like to call them, my own preferences have become clearer to me.

For the first time, Maureen had encountered a supervision that called her into consideration not just of the pragmatics of practice but also of the ethics and epistemology of practice. Inquiry that asked Maureen about the discursive positions available to counsellors had been helpful to her in locating her own preferences for ethical action. Maureen was thus invited into storying her professional identity, through reflection on and examination of the processes of producing her practice. This is the work of a reflective supervision practice from a discursive orientation. A counsellor and supervisor are doing more than building a theory for practice out of practice; they are also investigating the theories of knowledge they are using and might use for that building and the effects of the practices those theories produce. We do not make up the terms of

our theory building independently of the systems of thought that are our cultural and professional heritages.

> On the other hand and inversely, I would say that if I am now interested, in fact, in the way in which the subject constitutes himself (sic) in an active fashion, by the practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group. (Foucault, in Fornet-Betancourt, Becker, & Gomez-Müller, 1988, p. 11)

The questions that I used in Chapter One to explain my approach to the study are those to which I return as I draw together again the themes that have been recurrent in this account. What is this practice/object, supervision? What kinds of subjects does supervision produce and by what strategies does it produce them? What practice strategies do counsellors and supervisors find in their professional culture to employ in supervision? How are we positioned when we take up these practices? What forms of relationship are available to us to practice upon ourselves as we produce ourselves as ethical and responsible practitioners of counselling and supervision? When we practice responsibility, to whom are we responsible?

As I consider these questions, the chapter offers a description of a particular version of supervision. That version of supervision has as its emphasis the task of attending to the positioning in relation of counsellors. I argue that the work of supervision is to position counsellors *well* for the production of ethical counselling practice. The focus I take up now in this chapter is a description of supervision that emphasises positioning counsellors *well* for ethical counselling practice.

Repositioning counsellors in supervision: in from the margins

If counsellors are to position themselves and be positioned well for ethical counselling practice they need access to storylines that offer them such positions. I argue for enriching the accounts counsellors have to call on in inserting themselves in subjective subject positions in supervision. I have demonstrated

instances in the supervision literature that have marginalised counsellors in supervision. When counsellors are invisible as professional actors in accounts of supervision, they are produced as acted upon rather than agentive. The effects of this positioning were visible within this project. A marginal position had been reproduced in Kate's experience of supervision as a counsellor. In approaching supervision Kate had not had to be too knowing or *too demanding, or not too anything*, because, I argued, in her previous experience the supervisor was centred in supervision as knowing and responsible (Chapter Seven). The supervision relationship had been unilaterally constructed on the basis of the supervisor's knowledge and responsibility-taking, and had continued to be produced on that basis. In contrast, in the passage quoted in the introduction above, Maureen spoke about the effects of this project: those locations in supervision practice where she might be knowing and take up authority had been highlighted. Inquiry had been brought to the locations where she had experienced uncertainty, but counsellor uncertainty had not been met with supervisor certainty. Rather, the inquiry had made visible possibilities for ethical decision making for practice. Maureen was offered positions as an agent, as subjective subject, who investigated possibilities and articulated her practice preferences. Thus, the counsellor was repositioned in supervision discourse. Her access to positions from which she might produce her professional self as agentic had been enhanced. She was positioned to act as an ethical agent: the task of storying professional identity had been brought to the centre of the supervision conversation.

According to White (1995) and Bruner (1986), in storying identity we produce accounts in two landscapes, action and identity. When professional practice is storied only in the landscape of action as instrumental practice - what the counsellor has done and what they might do next - professional identity is only thinly storied. However, when the meanings of our actions are investigated in supervision, so that we story our practice in relationship with practice knowledge and systems of thought and communities of practice, as well as in terms of our own lives and histories and relationships and values, then we produce the kinds of rich description that builds professional identity. A richly storied professional identity positions counsellors well to be agentic in their counselling practice. Supervision is one of the sites where counsellors have ethical permission to speak

about our practice and ourselves in our practice: we, counsellors and supervisors, need to make use of its potential in order to position counsellors well for ongoing ethical action in counselling practice.

Counsellors as multi-storied[1] and multiply positioned

As counsellors and supervisors we inhabit the available storylines of supervision in particular ways. I argue that supervisors and counsellors need to pay ongoing attention to the stories provided by our professional and cultural contexts, and to recognise the multiplicity of stories that are available to us and that hail us to particular positions. The attractiveness of developmental models of supervision was noted by Holloway (1987) and Worthington (1987), both of whom warned that the profession should look beyond this attractiveness in evaluating developmental models. Kate's and Liz's experiences of the effects of being positioned as *beginning counsellors* were described in Chapter Seven. That positioning made invisible other positions they held. Bernard and Goodyear (1998) and Gardner, Bobele, and Biever (1997) reproduced this singular positioning of those new to the field in their assertion that new counsellors have a thin store of professional stories on which to call. I argue against such singular descriptions and explanations of and assumptions about developmental status. There is much that we fail to see when we look at counsellors through the lenses of singular developmental descriptions. Although this thesis has demonstrated the effects of these positions upon beginning counsellors, I do not think the limiting effects of such practices affect only those categorised as beginners.

Our professional identities are storied not only on the terms of the theory that produces *professional* stories. Although the distinction that counsellors do not go to supervision for therapy is accepted across the profession, there is less agreement on the extent to which personal lives are relevant in supervision. However, when supervision involves the storying of professional identity and counsellors are called to story their production of ethical practice, it is very difficult to do that in ways that are independent of our own lives. The values that produce our professional work also produce our lives. In Extract 10.2 Gillian

---

[1] The term is from White (1995).

offered a story from her own family life in her role as reflecting team member. Not only did her story demonstrate the idea that clients are not somehow people different from those of us who work as counsellors; it also brought a community of concern alongside the counsellor and client, thus offering a resource for the ongoing counselling work. In Extract 9.1 Deb drew on her experiences as a mother in the assessment of her concerns about her client's safety. Our lives are multiply storied, and personal as well as professional stories are resources for supervision. The task is to make visible how we use these resources, professional and personal, so that we wittingly evaluate the knowledge sources on which we draw. By evaluating the knowledge sources on which we draw we position ourselves well to take ethical responsibility for our counselling practices.

Just as I argue for applying caution about the nominalisation 'beginner', I argue for caution about employing the nominalisation 'narrative' to describe practice. In Chapter Eleven I showed two contrasting presentations of a celebration agenda. In the second of these Maureen's agency in producing pleasing therapeutic events was obscured by the nominalisation employed: *narrative* was what was to be celebrated. I took the position that it was Maureen's story, rather than narrative's story that was to be brought forward in the supervision. Although my work as supervisor was less collaborative than I would have preferred, nonetheless I affirm my interest in supporting Maureen to story her engagement with therapeutic practices that were effective for her client. I argue for the presence of the counsellor in stories of practice on a number of grounds. Here, I argue that there is not a singular story of narrative therapy from which counsellors are absent or disembodied. Rather, narrative therapy is produced in the embodied and relational actions of counsellors. It is these relational actions, actions taken in relation with people and with ideas, that can be uniquely storied as counsellor and supervisor investigate particular instances of practice for the identity stories they produce and for the moral orders in which they are situated. It is in the telling and the retelling that professional identity is performed.

Positions for supervisors

Supervisors, then, are positioned as audience to and participants in the telling and the retelling. They are to serve the retelling. They do not serve by simply

listening while counsellors narrate. Rather, supervisors are active in selecting from a range of positions they might take up in support of the counsellor producing themselves as a professional practitioner. I think of supervisors, too, as multiply positioned. Their task is a collaborative one: they are *alongside* the counsellor, according to Clare. The supervisor is alongside the counsellor in the storying of practice, for example in taking up the commentary position in exploring the discursive vista before them both. Ruth and Lee (Extract 8.1) were positioned alongside each other, exploring the discursive vista of decision-making. Theirs was a co-investigation, as in turn they added to the inquiry: either supervisor or counsellor could have been speaking at either conversational turn. As a reflecting team member, Mary was alongside Tania (Excerpt, 10.1), commenting on the effects of professional isolation as she knew them. Mary's joining with Tania was an anti-isolation move, as she positioned herself alongside.

The supervisor might also take a position *opposite* the counsellor, as a co-responsible colleague working to understand the discursive context on which the supervision is to focus, and where the counsellor is positioned in that context. This was the position Adele took as she stood back from assumptions about researching ideas or producing ideas, for Tania to action, around the low-client-numbers problem. She selected instead to work to understand the discursive production of the problem (Extract 9.2). Adele took care about her positioning: she did not wish to use the power relation of supervision to call Tania further into an unfavourable position in a *good counsellors* discourse. Supervision is a site of professional governance and, in a metadiscursive position, Adele selected to position herself in that governance in non-oppressive ways. She took a position opposite seeking to learn about the location of the problem: her inquiry helped to render the familiar strange as the calls of employment relations discourse were exposed.

Supervisors are positioned, too, as witnesses to counsellor practice. Di was witness to Emma's preferred and usual practice of standing in support of her clients, when that was temporarily threatened, and to the effects for Emma of standing alongside women in their struggle to free themselves from abusive relationships (Extract 8.2). Adele was witness to Tania's positioning in an

employment relations discourse. In the witness position, supervisors use their authority to offer commentary or inquiry that investigates the practices of power in which counsellors are positioned, or in which their clients are positioned.

These and other supervisor positions will be investigated further in the descriptions of supervision practice that follow. The descriptions will show that supervisors are multiply positioned as they engage in supervision as deconstructing inquiry.

Supervision and deconstructing inquiry

The theoretical resource of deconstruction was an important one in producing supervision practice in this study. Deconstructing strategies similar to those we employ in counselling were used, but we used them with awareness of the professional supervision relationships and tasks within which our practice was produced. The deconstructive task was taken up by counsellors, supervisors and the reflecting team. Deconstructing inquiry focussed on many sites: counselling practice, the discursive conditions of client's lives, supervision practice, our work in the project. This section describes modes of deconstructing inquiry in supervision.

Interrogating counselling discourse

Counselling practice is the central concern of supervision: supervision is about supporting the counsellor for effective practice with clients and monitoring that practice (*NZAC Code of Supervision, 2000*). It makes sense then, that counselling discourse will be an important focus of supervision talk as we make sense of our practice in responsible professional reflection. Although in the project we had varying familiarity with narrative counselling practices, each of us had undertaken the project on the basis of being open to further engagement with these practices. We investigated counselling discourse in a number of ways.

A collaborative stance was particularly visible in the decentred inquiry that was employed by members of the reflecting team in Phase Two. For example, Alex asked, "Is there an idea in counselling that ..." (Extract 10.3). Her inquiry was about the ideas that construct counselling practice, and, as Anne pointed out, was

thus *not judgmental* in respect of Laura's counselling practice. Laura was not the originator of the discourse that produced ideas about the focus of individual counselling. The mode of inquiry Alex employed was effective in separating "speaker from speech - identity from discourse" (Gergen, 1999, p.153): *is there an idea in counselling...*, she asked. When counselling practice is represented as an idea located in discourse, counsellors are invited into a position of evaluation of that idea. We can investigate that idea for its effects, and evaluate whether those are effects we seek or not. On that occasion, in their reflecting team conversation Alex and Gwen teased out the ideas that constructed counselling as individually focussed, although they did not name the discourse of individualism. However, what they did in their inquiry was to spotlight the locations in text where relationship was made invisible by the re-production of an individual emphasis in the dominant counselling wisdom. And it was the re-production of that emphasis that was constructing Laura as misguided in her concern for relationship.

Although the inquiry was decentred, emphasising discursive practices in counselling, the inquiry was neither disembodied nor distanced and objective. Alex, for example, placed *herself* as a moral actor in the discursive practices under consideration, when she offered an analogous example. As counsellors and supervisors and reflecting team members we are ourselves positioned in the discourses, the practices of which we are interrogating. Our interrogation is of discourse and positioning and discursive practice, rather than of persons, however. Nonetheless, counsellors are not absolved of responsibility for ethical action by this move. For within any discourse there are many positions we might take up, and many positions that might make ethical sense to take up. We employ the tools of deconstructing inquiry to enhance our options for ethical action, by taking care about selecting amongst the positions calls we hear. By selecting amongst the calls, we also select that which we go on to reproduce in our counselling practice. The value of a subjunctive mode (Parry & Doan, 1994) in supervision is illustrated by the supervision from which Extract 10.3 was taken. That supervision began with the professional story that counsellors are to focus on the person who is in the counselling room with them: *if* we take this account to present an important professional value, supervision will work to assist Laura to

reposition herself to attend singularly, that is only to her client. It was on that basis that the supervision had proceeded in Phase One. In Phase Two a second professional story was introduced through deconstructing inquiry: *if* we suspend our judgement that Laura's interest is inappropriate, what knowledge might her interest offer to the counselling work? The reflecting team inquiry rendered visible the construction and locatedness of practice: *if* we take Laura's actions to be legitimate how might we theorise that? *If* we are to take it that we limit our focus to the client in front of us, how are we to theorise that? In this way in deconstructing inquiry in supervision, we make visible how professional counselling actions come to be seen as making sense: the next move is to take responsibility for the positions in which we locate ourselves on the basis of this sense-making. We identify how we are and might be constituted as professional subjects in various counselling practices based in particular epistemologies. We identify the epistemological and professional story-lines in which we might insert ourselves and we take our inserting of ourselves to be responsible action for which and of which we can give account.

I make sense of Beth's storying of pleasing events in her practice on similar terms, although her supervision presentation had been very different (Extract 11.1). Laura (Extract 10.3) had presented herself as *burdened* (by what had seemed like inappropriate interest in her client's sister), while Beth wanted to *celebrate* (events in her practice). During the exploration of these pleasing events, through which Beth might insert herself into a storyline about narrative therapy, the supervisor asked her what these events and her pleasure *might* mean for her ongoing counselling work. Again the subjunctive mode presented the opportunity for a decentred conversation about discourse, before the thoughtful re-location of the self back into a selected position in the account. If she were to take her interest in narrative practices further, she would need to explore the idea that narrative works with some people and not with others, Beth had replied. The tentativeness of inquiry and response in subjunctive mode makes visible the location where Beth might insert herself as an ethical agent, positioning herself purposefully in her practice. I have described the conversation, here in this example, as "exploration" rather than as "deconstructing inquiry" as in the previous illustration: the similarity upon which I wish to focus is the processes of

inquiry that render visible the means by which we make up our practice in storying that practice and then locating ourselves as ethical actors within and producers of those stories. Counsellors who have engaged in and continue to be engaged in making sense of their actions in relation with professional knowledges are well positioned by supervision for ethical action in counselling.

This might seem like a big claim to make, and I might be asked to defend it by those concerned that I have not been sufficiently cognisant of professional standards. In responding to such inquiry, I would call on the notion of multiple voices. I would argue that, in the supervision I have been describing, counsellors and supervisors (and team members) work to locate themselves: there is always another account that is possible or another voice that might speak into the conversation. In Extract 11.2, I invoked a client's authority. Similarly, counsellors and supervisors might invoke other participants to the supervision conversation. *If you were a parent in this family, what would you be making of these ideas we are having*, we might ask. *If we were invited to defend this counselling action to an Ethics Committee hearing, how would we do that? If Linda (a respected colleague) were here, what would she be appreciating about the steps you have taken with this client? And is there anything else she might recommend, do you think, any particular concerns she might have?* These questions are not frivolous questions by which we can smugly reassure ourselves we have already thought of everything: nor are they about increasing our sense of supervision as surveillance. Rather, they suppose a professional community of many voices, as resources on which counsellors and supervisors might call. These sorts of questions are a purposeful acknowledgement of the situatedness of our work and the availability of many positions within the discourses of professional practice. We have responsibility for making these positions visible and calling on a present or imagined professional (and client) community as resources as we select the position calls to which we respond. The best we can do - and it is a very satisfactory best - is to acknowledge the contingency of our positioning and the deliberateness of our selections in taking actions we claim to be ethical.

Interrogating supervision discourse

A deconstructing supervision also interrogates the terms of its own production. Counsellors and supervisors pay attention to the effects of hierarchy, recognising that in supervision a relation of power exists between counsellor and supervisor. For the supervisor represents the professional community which constructs supervision as one of the bases of its claims for responsibility for autonomous professional self-regulation. We cannot step outside the regulatory aspect of supervision, but we can recognise its presence and effects. Practices that recognise the production of hierarchical oversight while minimising oppressive effects were exemplified in the project. For example, supervisors located their authority by situating questions or comments; they suggested that reports to agencies might be written collaboratively by counsellors and supervisors; attention was paid in moments of practice to the sort of person being assembled in supervision. Such practices work to unsettle taken for granted aspects of supervisory authority. In paying attention as supervisors to how we produce our authority, we pay attention to the supervision relationships we build with counsellors. In paying this attention, I argue, we work to position counsellors well to work with awareness of the production of professional authority, both in supervision and in counselling.

I have argued for the value of a wider inquiry about the terms of supervision discourse. A deconstructing supervision investigates not only particular supervision events but also the professional canon, for that canon is constitutive of those particular events. I note, too, that deconstruction is not achieved by singular action; the call of dominant practice is not readily silenced. The work of deconstructing supervision is ongoing. Davies wrote of

> ...the need for ongoing discourse analytic work, made necessary both by the sheer complexity of discourse and discursive practice, and by the power of dominant discourses to reassert themselves, and to erase partially or override the deconstructive work that has been done. (1998, p.138)

In the extract from Research Meeting Three that I quoted in the introduction to this chapter, Maureen said that the questions that had been put to her had *made* her clarify her position. I would have preferred that Maureen's experience had been of invitation into such clarification, and collaboration in that clarification. In having been *made*, Maureen has experienced herself as acted upon. There are vestiges of the counsellor positioned as in receipt of supervision (Manthei, 1997; Matthews, quoted in Hermansson, 1999). Metaphors like this, that position counsellors as subject to supervision by another, have considerable hold on the discourse of supervision: they are part of the everyday currency of professional talk, and are reproduced in the voices of senior members of the profession (Matthews, quoted in Hermansson, 1999; Manthei, 1997). In deconstructing supervision, I am arguing for a reworking of the discourse of supervision from one where counsellors are in the subjected subject position. I am speaking for a discourse of supervision where counsellors are not *in receipt of*, but are active in the subjective production of supervision just as they are active in the production of their counselling practice. However, as Davies suggested, "Putting a concept under erasure does not obliterate the term" (1998, p.139). A deconstructing supervision is one that calls us into an ongoing recursive reflection on and in the discourse practices we are reproducing for the ways in which they constitute relationship and constitute persons. We saw Adele, in Extract 9.2, resisting the call to position herself as expert by providing solutions, by *coming up with something*, for that position would be *oppressive* of Tania as counsellor. She was also subverting the reproduction of a discourse that called both Tania and herself to assemble themselves as *good* employees/counsellors/supervisors.

A deconstructing supervision is one where a supervisor takes a metadiscursive position in respect of supervision, noticing the moral orders in which their practice is produced. Where it is appropriate they might be explicit about the moral orders in which they, the supervisor, are positioned. In the Research Meeting Two discussion of Supervision 7 (Extract 11.2), Anne had suggested that it would have been helpful if I had located my inquiry about Val's celebration by disclosing the thinking behind my question. In Extract 7.1 I showed Zoe and Leah struggling to establish shared meaning when they were positioned in different supervision discourses. One discourse constructed supervision as conversation about action,

and the other as conversation about the interrelationships between actions and meanings. Neither paid particular attention to the positioning of the counsellor in the practice. Leah's later reflection had drawn attention to the effects of her questioning in inviting Zoe to defend her practice. In contrast, as Di worked to understand the concern Emma had brought to supervision (Extract 8.2), she asked Emma to clarify the territory in which she wanted the conversation located: would it be useful to focus on the difficult feelings or on the discursive context that produced those feelings, Di asked. If counsellors are not to be acted upon, invitations for them to be positioned as co-producers of supervision need to be made. Bilateral negotiation of supervision processes contrasts with the unilateral construction of supervision offered by dominant professional discourse. In bilateral negotiation counsellors are positioned well to ask for, rather than having to *demand* as Kate did, supervision that engages with their professional concerns on terms that make sense to them and that serve their counselling practice well.

In a deconstructing version of supervision supervisors and counsellors pay particular attention to how we inhabit the institution of supervision. We practise supervision knowing that we are participating in processes and strategies of professional self-governance. It is not a question of freeing ourselves from regulation but of recognising and investigating that regulation and its effects on us and on our relationships with those with whom we are in professional relationship. Recognition and investigation of regulation make possible the resisting, subverting and changing, of discourse practices, that Davies (1991) suggested is the expression of agency.

Producing alternative storylines for supervision

I suggested in Chapter One that my purpose is to add to the accounts of supervision upon which we have to call. This project has produced some alternative possibilities, some new conventions even, for offering accounts of professional practice in supervision. As this discussion chapter continues there are four aspects of a deconstructing supervision to which I wish to draw attention. I believe that professional identity is produced more richly when our supervision talk takes us into these domains. The four aspects which I now address in turn

are: alternative discourses of responsibility; storying the pleasures of our work; a supervision of the imaginary; an emphasis on professional community.

Redescribing responsibility

When supervisors are involved in ongoing live supervision with counsellors as they work with clients we might know with most certainty about the effectiveness of the work of counsellors with each individual client or family. But in counselling in New Zealand, counsellors and supervisors are likely to meet together once a fortnight for one hour. Supervision is mostly by self-report. The kind of detailed case-by-case oversight, about which King and Wheeler (1999) asked in their U.K. study of supervisor responsibility, is not possible in these circumstances. Nor, I note, is there any evidence of the effectiveness of that case by case oversight mode of supervision. What kinds of responsibility, then, is it sensible and possible for supervisors to take in these local circumstances? What kinds of responsibility is it possible for supervision to produce?

As I have shown, both in the readings of the literature I have given and in the examples in Chapter Seven, the discourse of supervisor responsibility is one that has considerable currency. Borders and Leddick suggested that a supervisor is responsible for "a counselor and that counselor's clients, for the counselor's learning and the counselor's welfare" (1987, p.2). In the expansiveness of this account of supervisor responsibility little space is left for the counsellor themselves to be responsible for anything. On the other hand King and Wheeler's (1999) study showed that amongst U.K. supervisors there was little agreement about the extent of supervisors' responsibilities and few were willing to take action in relation to concerns about a counsellor's practice. They suggested that an assurance of oversight at the level of casework could not be assumed. In New Zealand, Janet Irwin as Chair of the Ethics Committee of NZAC appeared to suggest that improved or increased supervision could be implicated in preventing future ethical breaches (Hermansson, 1999, p.147-148). How that would happen is not clear: would it be improved supervisor vigilance or would more attention be paid to questions of ethical practice that would make a difference, or would it be something else?

Each of those positions produces a different relation between counsellor and supervisor and produces responsibility differently. In particular the Borders and Leddick position produces a supervision in which responsibility is located in the supervisor. This present study has shown how echoes of that position were reproduced in local practice, although there is no local literature to suggest that supervisor responsibility is to be this extensive, and the NZAC Codes do not locate this extent of responsibility in the supervisor. Clare noted that she felt responsibility to monitor the workloads of those she supervised in order that she could be accountable if that was required (by the professional Association): *I am it*, she said, indicating a sense of ultimate accountability and responsibility that she carried. Clare was thus taking seriously the expectation Irwin that supervisor monitoring might ensure ethical practice.

More particularly, however, the practices of instrumentality about which participants spoke and which were produced in some of the supervision in this project showed the effects of the extension of the discourse of supervisor responsibility produced by and producing Borders and Leddick's position. All participants reported contact with versions of the relations of surveillance - *reporting in and checking up* – produced within the terms of this discourse, although it was Kate and Liz who spoke most emphatically about their experiences of the positions offered counsellors within this regime. One of the problematic practices of this regime was the insertion of the supervisor into a position of expertise over a counsellor's work. In practice, as in much of the supervision literature, the counsellor was thus offered a subjected position in supervision, a position from which, I argue, it is very difficult to exercise the moral and ethical responsibilities of counselling practice. Kate had noticed the absence of authority that she had experienced as *the supervised person* when the supervisor took the expert position in exercising unilateral responsibility.

At the other extreme from the Borders and Leddick position is the very flexible and unclear approach to responsibility to which King and Wheeler's (1999) research drew attention. I argue that that position is equally and perhaps more problematic. At worst, a more or less laissez-faire position appears to call neither counsellor nor supervisor into positions from which to exercise ethical and moral

responsibilities for the responsible work of counselling. The professional culture in New Zealand has had more in common with that in which King and Wheeler conducted their research than that for which Borders and Leddick wrote. In New Zealand, as in the U.K. participation in supervision is mandated by the professional association but its work is not governed by statute and there is no available case law.

This project brought to its centre alternative sets of discursive practices for the exercise of responsibility in supervision. The preceding chapters have offered descriptions of discursive practice in which responsibility was exercised as relational responsibility. For example, Emma and Di (Extract 9.2) investigated the discursive production of Di's temporary separation from her preferred stance in relation with her clients. Collaborative inquiry would restore Di's preference, not supervisor intervention to establish *right practice*. However, the inquiry did not slip into a position where anything at all would do, for the work of the supervision showed Di investing herself in a metadiscursive commentary position about the effects of the separation for her relations with her clients. Phoebe and Frances (Extract10.4), too, invested themselves in positions of relational responsibility in their reflecting team conversation as they took positions to claim that counsellors have a responsibility to take a position in their work. These practices of relational responsibility work as ethical action, for they produce conversations where the effects of practices and practice positions are made visible. The exercise of responsibility for the effects of our practices is taken to be ethical action.

In these and other ways the project constructed a storyline of responsibility that constructs responsibility as produced within the supervision relationship rather than in the person of the supervisor. A supervisor cannot be in the practice setting with the counsellor: the counsellor needs to be well positioned to take ethical responsibility for their counselling practice. The exercise of responsibility in supervision involves making visible the moral orders in which we practice counselling to position counsellors well for ongoing ethical practice.

An emphasis on professional community

When responsibility is produced in the supervision *relationship* rather than in the person of the supervisor, relationship is brought to the centre of supervision. While the literature makes claims about the importance of relationship in supervision, I demonstrated in Chapter Three that those claims do not always hold up well when we look at how and where the counsellor is positioned. In emphasising relationship, I also emphasise professional community, whether that community is present in the imaginations of the counsellor and supervisor or is represented by a reflecting team, for example. It is in relationship with professional community that authority for practice is negotiated. Clare said, in Research Meeting Three,

> The reinforcement [of pleasing events in practice] for me comes from the process, not from any person in particular, from the process and the way of thinking. Not from an authority; like we become the authority, including myself.

Clare's speaking pays attention to processes of *local* authorisation in professional community, rather than prescription of practice from the cultural/professional centre, or in the person of the supervisor. Local authorisation is not to be interpreted through a lens of autonomy and individualism, but through the lens of a local, negotiating, dialogical community of practice that understands responsibility to be relational. Such a professional community of concern is not itself closed, nor closed to other voices, but is in negotiation with other voices and its own, itself multivocal rather than univocal. Its work is generated in relation with the professionally available approaches to practice and knowledge and power, as it reworks them in response to the ethical questions produced in practice. Liz reflected on the effects for her of the sense of community of practice the reflecting team offered her:

> Yeah, I think it's kind of, like; you come up with that expression, 'lives more richly described' [White, 1995], but it seems like [this process invites] a fuller experience of what I know; that if I only draw on my own

voice, that's far more limiting if I've only got my own voice to draw on. But I know that I've got your voice to draw on, Clare, and Kate's and Kathie's, and Anne's ...

Liz was emphasising the presence in her everyday professional life of the reflecting team group as a community of professional concern. Her professional identity and practice were produced as she called on the voices of the community of concern. In the project, the reflecting team offered an embodied, present representation of the professional community. In dyadic supervision, however, the voices of other professionals can be invoked, as we deconstruct counselling or supervision practice, as we investigate our positioning, as we story our practice, and as we present our abilities.

I argue that supervision is an act of and in professional community. It involves the collegial collaboration of professionals who meet to enhance the effectiveness and ethical production of a counsellor's practice. The supervisor is thus positioned as a representative of the professional community which constitutes supervision in this way. Supervision is thus in many ways a public task, one for which counsellor and supervisor might be held to account in the professional community, in its processes of government. Community might reproduce a discourse of surveillance, or it might be recruited as audience to developments in a counsellor's professional practice. As a public task, supervision is a site of the performance of counsellor identity, one where that performance is produced in relation with professional colleagues. It is a site for assembling ourselves as moral actors, responsible in the professional work of counselling and to our professional peers who are audience to our claims.

A supervision of the imaginary

The imaginary might enter supervision in a number of ways and for a number of purposes, not only in the form of an imaginary community of concern. Anne asked the team to *think with* her about the possibilities for ongoing practice with her client who had made significant changes in his marijuana use (Extract 10.2). She was not calling only on our established practice knowledge, but was inviting us to engage with her in the production of possibilities, to use acts of the

imagination. Supervision in the subjunctive mode, producing talk of possibilities, contrasts with supervision in the indicative mode (Parry & Doan, 1994) where factual accounts are offered in reciprocal processes of reporting in and checking up. As we saw with Val in Extract 11.2, the move into the subjunctive mode may be a difficult aspect of a migration of professional identity toward narrative practice. Where a discourse of supervisor responsibility prevails and supervision is produced on instrumental terms, there is little room for the imaginary. When we move into the generativity of the imagination in supervision, we produce a supervision discourse that goes beyond established professional knowledge and beyond what is already known in a particular piece of client work. Acknowledging that *the full story* of which Kate spoke - the full facts of the client's story and the counselling story - cannot be told or known, we seek other possible stories, and explanations and meanings. We thus expand the possibilities for practice.

Storying the pleasures of our work

The moves in counselling from deficit-orientated therapies to strengths-oriented ones offer a similar reorientation for supervision (Lowe & Guy, 1996; White, 1997). One aspect of that reorientation was taken up in this project through the celebration metaphor. In the discussion of responsibility, above, I noted the constraints imposed by the ratio of counselling to supervision work, when supervision is a fortnightly activity. I have heard the argument made that supervision must focus on areas for development, not on existing competencies, because of this time constraint. However, it does not seem to me to be reasonable to assume that development occurs in practice only when we focus on aspects of practice that are problematic. Through paying attention to competence, to those aspects of our work which please us, to those moments or sessions when our work is most effective, we enlarge the presence of those aspects of our practice. We make positions of competence or pleasure more accessible through richly storying the events that produced them. As Liz and Anne noticed, *to bring to the fore* descriptions of strengths and preferred practices enhances counsellor agency. When supervision conversations highlight locations in supervision text where counsellors are agentic, counsellors are positioned well for the production of ethical counselling practice with their clients.

This chapter

This chapter has assembled together the central ideas produced in this project. It has emphasised in particular the ways in which the project responded to my first research question: what might the narrative metaphor offer counselling supervision? The responses I have offered in this chapter will be summarised in Chapter Fourteen. The second research question, about a local version of counselling, has been given less direct attention here. The responses to that question are diverse. Importantly, the local professional culture is not subject to the legislative or licensing bindings of the profession in North America. Without these bindings we are offered opportunity to deconstruct the discourse of supervisor responsibility and resist its solidification. I think that is one of the most significant moves a constructionist approach to supervision offers. We are offered the possibility of locating responsibility in professional relationship and in professional community. I think, too, that here in New Zealand we need to work to read supervision through the texts of our local codes where we have kept counsellors visible as the subjects of sentences about supervision and monitoring and responsibility. In our local professional culture we have many possibilities for producing supervision otherwise, for taking care about how we use it in self-government of our professional selves. Deconstruction offers opportunity to render such possibilities visible and accessible. That has been a worthwhile outcome of this project.

The third research question, about the implications of the responses to the first two for counsellor and supervisor education, has had little direct attention. It is that question to which the next chapter offers a partial response.

Chapter Thirteen

Taking the practice forward

Introduction

The criterion for acceptability of a knowledge claim is the fruitfulness of its implementation. (Polkinghorne, 1992, p.162)

My interest in producing knowledge to serve practice, about which I wrote in Chapter Five, has not been lost over the time and the events of this project. In this chapter I offer an example of the productivity of this research project, an example which does not take the account beyond the bounds for which this study had ethical approval, as many examples that come to mind might. White introduced the term "taking it back practices" (1997, p.202), to describe the ways in which, for example, a client who has made their interview with White accessible to others, is offered in return reflections from those who witness the taped interviews. These reflections will acknowledge the contribution of the client to the professional or personal understandings of the witnesses. This chapter constitutes something of a taking it back practice, a witnessing to one of the ways in which this project has directly shaped my own practice in counsellor education. In this way it serves as acknowledgement of some of what the participants and the project offered to me. At the same time the chapter also serves as a forum of accountability, describing an example of how I have put this project to work, in taking it back to the practice community.

My third research question asked about the implications of this study's findings for the education of counsellors and supervisors in supervision in a narrative mode. This chapter offers one of my responses to this question. This thesis has drawn attention to some subjected subject positions offered counsellors in dominant supervision discourse. In contrast with the position spoken by Matthews, "in receipt of supervision" (Chapter Four), or the position spoken by Kate, *I didn't know what to demand, really* (Chapter Seven), I have come to work with counselling students, from the beginning of their counsellor education, to consider discursive positions in supervision. I explore with them possibilities for students of counselling to

experience themselves as producers of supervision. Those interests underpin the accounts of practice that follow.

The chapter offers an account of two aspects of my teaching for students in the first professional paper of our Masters in Counselling programme, 1031.541 Counselling Skills, in the area of supervision. Firstly, I present the text of a paper I have written addressing these students. Secondly, I introduce a class activity that I offer to this group.

Students in the Skills paper vary greatly in their experience of counselling. For example, in this year's group some are new to the field, and this is their first counsellor education; some have positions in schools, a setting with which they are familiar but in another role; and others have worked in counselling or social work for as long as I have, and are seeking a masters level qualification for the first time. Students will all have enrolled, either previously or concurrently, in the course, 1031.508 Discourse and Counselling Psychologies, that provides the constructionist base of our programme. Students in this Skills course participate in a practicum of two hundred hours. Their professional supervisors may be based in their placement agency, or students may contract with an external community-based supervisor. As academic staff in the course, we see our role as teachers rather than supervisors.

While there is only a small amount of teaching time allocated to supervision, my interest in teaching this component is in thinking about students positioning themselves in agentive positions in supervision to support them in producing professional identity. I do not think that relying on an apprentice-style learning about supervision, in supervision (Carroll, 1996; Holloway & Poulin, 1995), is good enough. For the apprentice-style or being-in-receipt position leaves students at risk of the position that Kate reported in this study, and that Carroll reported from his U.K. study, of not knowing what to ask for and of leaving decisions about how supervision will be to the supervisor. Kate noted that she would be *much more demanding* in the future in supervision relationships. She said, *I didn't really make a lot of demands. Maybe I didn't know what to ask for.* My intention is to offer opportunities for counselling students to position themselves well for respectful relationship in supervision, knowing what to ask for, and positioned well to ask for it.

It is not that I do not have faith in supervisors. Rather, supervision is a discursive practice, and each supervision relationship takes place constituted as discursive practice. A site of professional self-government, supervision (like counsellor education) is not invulnerable to reproducing practices that might separate new counsellors-in-education off from already-held knowledges and abilities and ways of being. On this basis, then, I suggest that counsellors who are well prepared to find ways to negotiate for collaborative positions in supervision, including at the beginning of their careers, are likely better prepared to be flexible and collaborative in engaging in counselling relationships that are respectful and ethical. They will be familiar with thinking about positioning in professional relation.

This paper, *Supervision: Locating yourself in an agentive position, in respectful relation*, is written as preparatory reading before a classroom session on supervision.

Supervision: Locating yourself in an agentive position, in respectful relation

Introduction

I don't know what experiences of supervision you each bring to this course, or what plans you have for supervision this year. This paper is written to offer you some possibilities as you orient towards taking up supervision as part of this course. While there are many systems and practices of supervision you and your supervisor could together *copy*, there are also great opportunities for you *originating* together (White, 1995) in your work in supervision. I believe that an originating supervision, a supervision that is generative both of supervision practices and of counselling practices is that which best serves us as counsellors in the work we do with clients.

There is widespread agreement about the purpose of supervision: the provision of ethical and effective services to those we meet as clients.

> Ultimately, supervision is for their (clients') benefit. (Holloway and Carroll, 1996, p.154)

> Supervision is primarily about ensuring that clients are helped and protected. (Feltham, 2000, p.11)

> The primary purpose of supervision is to enable the counsellor to address the needs of the client as effectively as possible. (New Zealand Association of Counsellors' (NZAC) Handbook, p. 27)

But how do we do this? How do we make supervision work in the best interests of our clients? The NZAC Code suggests that supervision is concerned with "monitoring, developing, and supporting individuals in their role as counsellors". Mearns (1995) questioned whether what he characterised as the "nutritious" and "policing" functions could be done in the same supervision relationship. Carroll (1996) suggested that supervision is primarily an educational process, while Neufeldt, Iversen and Juntunen (1995) emphasised inducting counsellors to be reflective practitioners. With Neufeldt, Iversen and Juntunen I am interested in a supervision that is productive of reflective practice. I am also interested to invite you to reflect on supervision practice.

A useful working definition of supervision with which to begin this reflection is that offered by Inskipp and Proctor:

> a working alliance between a supervisor and a counsellor (or counsellors) in which the counsellor can offer an account or recording of her work; reflect on it; receive feedback and where appropriate guidance. The object of the alliance is to enable the counsellor to gain in ethical competence, confidence and creativity so as to give her best possible service to her clients." (1994, p.1)

Positioning and supervision

I have been interested in both what the literature says and what it doesn't say about supervision. Let me begin with you, the counsellor in supervision. What are your experiences of and expectations of supervision? In what ways do you anticipate that supervision will work to support, develop and monitor your practice this year? Do you notice that I use the nominalisation *supervision*: I do not suggest that your supervisor will undertake these tasks, but that the site of supervision is one where you will partner your supervisor to work at these tasks together. I note that the NZAC Code of Ethics supports this view, in the insertion of the counsellor into the subject position in this sentence as the person responsible for the monitoring.

> Counsellors shall monitor their work through regular supervision by professionally competent supervisors. (NZAC Handbook, 2000, p.25)

Supervision, then, is a site where you reflect on your practice, in partnership with a supervisor, and bring forward an account of your practice that will serve your work with clients. Who are you, in relation with the supervisor, as you engage in the work of reflection and generativity? I refrained from using Worthen and McNeill's (1996) comment in my introduction, because of its use of the word, *supervisee.*

> The heart of psychotherapy supervision is the attempt to increase the supervisee's ability to work effectively with clients (p.31).

You are already familiar with the concept of positioning (Davies, 1991). I suggest that the grammatical form of the word *supervisee* offers a position in relationship that construes the counsellor as subject*ed,* as the one acted upon. A supervis*or* supervis*es,* and a supervis*ee* is supervis*ed.* The language form, supervis*ee* places the holder of that position as an object of the supervis*or*'s practice. And yet, it is the counsellor's work as a professional that brings them to supervision. For this reason, I prefer to speak about the partners in supervision as counsell*or* and supervisor. A *counsellor,* I suggest, is offered a position from which to engage actively and responsibly in producing effective and ethical practice in supervision. When a *counsellor* becomes a *supervisee* in relation with a supervis*or,* when they become the object of the sentence, the *done to* person rather than a *doing* person, their agency is obscured. A *supervisee* is grammatically positioned to have their identity "authored for them" rather than to author themselves (Candlin, 1997, p.xi).

I believe that you will find supervision most productive of your counsellor identity when conditions are such that your agency is brought forward, and you are authoring your professional identity in supervision. This is a particular version of the reflective practitioner, one who stories their professional identity in reflective supervision conversations. How might you position yourself well for and in this storying? Let me return to the question I asked earlier: who are you, in relation with the supervisor as you engage in the work of reflection and generativity?

I think it is worth giving thought to this question before you begin the supervision relationship that is part of your placement contract for this course. For the story that you are a student in the first professional paper for this qualification is only one story that could be told about you. Can I suggest that there are likely to be many other stories you have about yourself and about your professional self that might support you in offering your supervisor the kind of collaborative partnership that might see you both co-labouring over the same endeavour, as Fine and Turner suggest?

> Therapists experience the supervisor co-laboring with them in creating new therapy paths – everyone wearing the same yellow hard hats as they jointly forge through the brush and maneuver across uncharted ground. (Fine & Turner, 1997, p.237)

I like this piece for it conjures up for me the sense that together counsellor and supervisor grapple with the ideas and practices out of which you produce yourself as an ethical and effective practitioner. Knowledges and practices can be co-produced. What stories do you have about yourself that might support you to "unsettle" a version of supervision that might have *you being supervised*, and support you to engage in a supervision that has you co-labouring? In what ways do you know yourself in terms of the preparations you have made for this time in your working life? In what ways do others know you in terms of the preparations you have made for this time in your working life? What ways of being in your work, and in your connecting with people, have you brought forward to support you in taking on what this course offers?

I ask these questions, with the intention of inviting you to think about supervision and positioning, and the position calls to which you might want to respond, and the position calls that you might want to be the speaker of. Who will you be in supervision? Who will your supervisor come to know you as? We will look at this matter of positioning further in the 541 class on supervision, through some experiential exercises.

How does supervision happen?

Just as a counsellor works from a chosen epistemological position (I am assuming that you have read Griffith & Griffith (1992)), so will a supervisor. The supervisor's epistemological position will of course influence how supervision happens. Most recently both Holloway (1995) in the US and Carroll (1996) in the UK have advocated for generic, rather than counselling-theory-specific approaches in supervision, and that supervision is a specialist activity in its own right. In these ways they have been drawing distinctions between counselling and supervision. Carroll argued for an educational model of supervision, on the basis that supervision has an educational orientation. Holloway offered a systems model. Whatever the supervisor's chosen orientation, I think the base-line is a mutual respect for the other's choice. Battles for epistemological supremacy don't belong in the supervision room. Locally, Flintoff (1996) demonstrated that her sample of students in our programme preferred supervision with a supervisor with a narrative orientation; Feltham and Dryden (1994) and Todd and Storm (1997b) recommend a match in theoretical orientation. At the same time, some very helpful supervisory collaboration has happened when

supervisors from other orientations have been keen to engage in supervision working respectfully across epistemological differences.

I recommend that you interview your supervisor about how they approach supervision. What do they understand its purpose to be? How do they go about engaging in that purpose? What ways of being will they be looking to you to bring? What ways of being will they bring? What kind of relationship do they understand the supervisory one to be? Carroll (1996) reported that the metaphor of grandparent-parent-child had been used to describe the supervisor-counsellor-client relation. Does that metaphor or the co-labouring one draw your supervisor more, or do they prefer another?

And how will the monitoring of supervision be managed? Is the supervisor happy to partner you in the review of and (critical) reflection on your work, understanding that the monitoring responsibility is yours? Or do they have some other expectation about monitoring? What code of ethics and code of supervision inform their practice? The New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Codes are the ones we want you to be familiar with and to practice in respect of, in the programme.

These questions are all relevant to you and your supervisor making a working agreement that relates to your work together. Inskipp and Proctor (1993) and Storm (1997) offer useful guidelines for contracting, which together with our course outline, will support you to complete the documentation of the agreement you negotiate with your supervisor and lodge with us. Working agreements should remain reviewable and negotiable.

Mollon (1997) wrote of supervision as a *space to think*. I think that it is important to consider how you prepare to use that space. It may be useful for you to have a supervision book, where you record practice questions as they arise in your placement setting. It is my experience that self-supervision happens as I prepare for supervision. I also believe that purposeful preparation means that counsellors make best use of the limited time we have for supervision. Preparation, then, is a dialogue with yourself and the ideas and practices with which you are familiar, in anticipation of the dialogue with your supervisor. Many supervisors appreciate a clear presentation of the supervisory agenda, and clear prioritising. The only guideline I want to offer about prioritising is that where there are ethical concerns or concerns about safety for you or your client or others in your client's life that arise out of your counselling work, these must have first priority. This is another matter that needs

clarification in the working agreement, along with means of contact between supervision sessions for urgent consultation when a concern about safety arises.

Preparation, too, may help you to produce a clear, succinct opening to supervision. My experience is that a long monological introduction does not invite a supervisor to engage with my work. Hall, Sarangi and Slembrouck (1997, p.270) suggested that a long story told uninterruptedly conveys to the listener a "don't ask me questions, my story will answer all your concerns" message. What kind of invitation do you want to offer your supervisor? How can they best serve you in this reflection on your work through which you find ways forward for yourself in your work?

As you work to prioritise as part of your preparation, it might be helpful to remember that this *space to think* is so that your work with clients is ethical and effective. Time for reflection on an instance of work that has been effective is not a low priority, in my view. The rich storying of an instance of practice might help you to bring forward and to make more available particularly effective styles of working: a particular aspect of deconstructing questioning, the development of a particular metaphor and so on. I think of storying professional identity as being the focus of supervision, that you are giving an account of practice and your location in it so that you work purposefully and intentionally and ethically with your clients. If we believe that identity is public and social, cultural and historical, the storying of professional identity is not a *self*-centred activity inappropriate to supervision, but a relationally-centred activity that engages with the professional self-in-relation. As professional selves counsellors are in relation with their supervisors, their clients, those with whom their clients are in relation, the placement agency, the university, the profession, the professional association, the systems of knowledge and practice on which counselling draws.

Deconstructing supervision

I wonder if you have taken a deconstructing interest in this term, *supervision*. It is used in many contexts and with different meanings from that with which it is imbued in our profession. The terms co-vision and consultation and mentoring have bee proposed as alternatives to supervision. White (1997) argued that the term co-vision is "problematic in that it obscures the power relation that is established by this privilege (the location of the person providing the supervisory consultation, as senior and as financially rewarded, for example), a power relation that significantly influences the outcome of the consultation" (p.149). I do not think these alternatives - co-vision, consultation, mentoring - work: they do not include the *ongoing commitment* to which supervisors are called, their joining a counsellor in commitment to the ongoing ethical review and preview of their work with clients. For this reason, I continue to use the word supervision, while thinking of it as a term *under erasure*.

> Derrida puts a cross through the word he is deconstructing in such a way as to leave the word visible, readable. The cross signals that it is still a word we need to use, as we do not know how to proceed without it. By putting it under erasure we can signal that it is problematic, in need of deconstructive work. That deconstructive work may eventually lead to the production of a different way of talking, of making sense of who we are or what we are doing (Davies, 1998, p.139).

I use the term, supervision, here, as there appears to be no better alternative available at present.

As I leave this discussion, I pick up White's point about power relations in supervision. I have already drawn your attention to positioning in supervision, hoping to open space for alternative possibilities to be available to you. The supervisory power relation will likely intersect with others of gender, culture, class, and other identity classifications. In what ways might it be productive of your agency in supervision for these intersecting power relations to be acknowledged? In what ways might such acknowledgement produce a subjective position for you in the supervisory relation? I ask these questions, remembering Davies' suggestion.

> Agency is never freedom from discursive constitution of the self but the capacity to recognise that constitution and to resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted (Davies, 1991, p.51).

At the same time as, in supervision, you might be examining the discursive constitution of a client or of a problem concern or of the relation between you and a client, you yourself continue to be discursively constituted. As we both do, as I write and then you read these ideas!

Working collaboratively in supervision

The literature uses the term, supervisory alliance. Let me ask you four final questions about you and this alliance. What ideas do you have about how counsellors and supervisors might work together to build working alliances that are productive of counsellor authority? And more importantly what is it that you as counsellor have done and might do in the construction of supervision relationships that will serve you well, that will offer you collaborative conversation, if that is what you seek?

Loganbill, Hardy and Delworth listed supervisor variables that were considered significant in effective supervisory relationships: *genuineness, potency, optimism, courage, sense of time as a gift, sense of humour, capacity for intimacy, openness to fantasy and imagery, respect and consideration* (1982, pp.28-29). What ways of being do you bring to supervision to contribute to a supervision that is satisfying and effective for you and for your supervisor? How will you introduce these ways of being to your supervisor?

What to bring to supervision?

Supervision is a space to think about your work, a site to perform as a reflective practitioner. Supervision is a relation in which you story your professional identity. You may wish to bring to supervision instances of practice that disturb you or worry you, intrigue you or delight you or give you pleasure, puzzle you or frighten you, separate you from your sense of competence or thrill you for their meaningfulness. You may focus on work with a particular client or you may want to review work with a number of clients where themes are similar. Or you may bring a particular problem area that represents the woods through which you and your supervisor will find a way together to produce new understandings for you both. Or there may be aspects of agency practice, or of wider-professional practice that draw your attention. Or struggles to put constructionist ideas to work when other ideas are familiar, or to connect instances of work with constructionist ideas to produce new practice. These are some possibilities for supervision conversations. The sharing of tapes of your practice is another which I strongly encourage (Crocket, 1998b). The informed consent involved in taping will be covered in the Ethics section of the course. Your supervision book can be a place where you gather together possibilities for supervision conversations, possibilities available for you to review as you prepare for meeting with your supervisor. I repeat my earlier suggestion that preparation for supervision will support you to use supervision well: some of the work of supervision is done as counsellors prepare, for in our preparation we are self-supervising. You may be interested to notice, too, the professional self-identity stories you tell as you prepare for supervision; and to notice the supervision relationships into which this preparation calls you and your supervisor.

In conclusion

My hope in offering you this brief paper is that you will have access to an account of supervision that offers you more authority than those readily available accounts that focus on monitoring and reassuring new counsellors, and more collegiality than offered by the grandparent-parent-child metaphor (to which Carroll (1996) referred). Perhaps donning a yellow hard hat (Turner & Fine, 1997) is not your preference, and perhaps metaphors of coast rather than bush, or quite different metaphors

altogether, speak to you of the kind of working relationship which you and your supervisor might together navigate towards. For now, let me use the navigation metaphor to suggest that supervision will depend as much on a counsellor's contribution, as on a supervisor's, for the co-navigational work of supervision: to be in a supervision relationship, I suggest, you already have much experience in navigating in a variety of conversations and the supervision relationship will be enriched by the accounts that you bring to it.

Thinking about positions in relation

In this work to think with counselling students about the positions-in-relation that are offered to them in supervision, I am interested in helping them identify subjective subject positions that will be most productive of their agency as counsellors. I want them to be well positioned for intentional participation in supervision. In a teaching session as part of this work of orientation to supervision, I invite students into an imaginary storying experience. My purpose in this activity is to bring forward into the work and relationship of supervision, a richer range of accounts than would otherwise be present, for I suggest that both dominant developmental accounts and dominant supervision accounts pay little attention to the qualities and competencies that newer counsellors already have present in their lives. These alternative accounts are a rich resource for storying professional identity and for the serious work of supervision.

Into the imaginary

As we begin this experience, I ask the students to sit quietly with themselves and to think of someone, from another setting, who knows them and their work or their qualities well. They might think of one of the people who supported their application to our programme, or of a professional colleague in a previous setting, or of someone with whom they work on a committee, or a friend who supports their current study. I then ask them to imagine that former colleague, or other, having a conversation with the person who is to be their supervisor. As they imagine this conversation, these are the kinds of questions I ask. (These questions work better read aloud, for they come from the spoken word.)

What might your former colleague, for example, tell your supervisor about the qualities they themselves most appreciate in you and your work? What other qualities, that they value, might they tell about? What ways of being do you think they might want to speak of appreciating as they speak of their experiences of you? What experiences of you will they be drawing on in this telling?

As you imagine this conversation, what might your former colleague tell your supervisor about what they think your supervisor will come to appreciate about working with you, in supervision? And what else might they say of what they think your supervisor may come to appreciate?

As you imagine yourself entering the supervision relationship with your supervisor, what will it be like for you entering that supervision relationship with that supervisor, carrying with you these accounts of yourself that you have just overheard in this imagined conversation? How do you see yourself as you engage in the work of supervision alongside your supervisor? What does it mean for you to see yourself in these ways? What does it mean for the supervision relationship that you see yourself in these ways? How do you see your supervisor seeing you? What does it mean for you and for the supervisor that you see your supervisor seeing you in these ways? What does it mean for the work of supervision?

My experience is that these kinds of questions open the supervision space to be otherwise than an assumed hierarchy of expert and beginner. The questions offer counsellors positions where they, too, are seen to bring experiences, wisdom and valued personal and professional qualities and experiences to supervision. Experiences, knowledge and qualities that might have been obscured become available and accessible. In this way counselling students are positioned *well* to engage in robust reflection on their counselling work in supervision. My experience has been that these acts of the imaginary work to position them well, too, to engage in building a working supervision relationship in collaboration with their supervisor. Counselling students are less likely to find themselves in the position of having supervision *done to* them. Students have spoken of the value of making more visible to themselves the many stories that make up their lives at a time when a story of

themselves as a beginning counsellor might obscure the richness what they already bring for the work of supervision. *Who are we, as we sit down together, you and I, in supervision?* It seems to me that this is an important question for counsellors and supervisors to be asking. *What stories of our personal and professional lives do we both bring to this work?* The pause in which these questions are asked offers space to think about respectful relationship in supervision, relationship that recognises that we are all multiply storied. The supervision room is alive with the possibilities of the stories that might be told. I take my task as a counsellor educator to be the highlighting of the positions in the texts which students might take up to locate themselves well in supervision and for the responsible tasks they share with their supervisors in supervision.

It is also my task to engage in education with supervisors. While that work is another story, to be told in a future publication, I note that it calls on the same theoretical and practical interests as my work with counsellors. It thus emphasises supervision as a discourse practice, paying attention to the strategies by which supervision produces us as professional counsellors both through the profession's accounts of supervision and in its moment by moment practices.

The work of this chapter

This chapter has demonstrated two instances of practice where I have taken forward some practice possibilities generated in this study for my work in preparing counsellors for participation in supervision. In this way it provides a very partial answer to the question of the implications of the study's findings for the education of counsellors and supervisors. Clearly, the implications, in general, are that supervision is studied and practised on the understanding that supervision is itself a discourse practice, a practice produced by and producing relations of power, making some modes of being possible and constraining others. This understanding, rather than models, rather than techniques, underpins my approach to supervision in a counsellor education curriculum. What accounts of supervision do we have available, and what positions do they offer us? What practices are we producing on the basis of this account, and what effects do these practices have? What are the practices we prefer for ethical relation between ourselves, and between us and those with whom we are in professional relation? These questions sit alongside our encounters with the

knowledges that are on offer at the profession's centre as I engage in producing and "delivering" a supervision curriculum in counsellor education.

Chapter Fourteen

Producing practice

> I did indeed grow up with a fault line running through me, but that is a very New Zealandish feature when you consider that it is a country of earthquakes and volcanoes. [...] Perhaps the country has imposed its own unstable geography on my power to perceive. I don't mind. I regret it only in the sense that one always regrets not being able to be everything all at once. Dislocations can expose the secret nature of the land. They can make for an intensely interesting landscape, provided one doesn't come to feel that a landscape full of fault lines is the only legitimate kind. Dislocations make me a world reader rather than a local one, and they make me contingent rather than categorical. (Mahy, 2000, p.33)[1]

Research and supervision practice: location and dislocation

Perhaps it is not so surprising that in the words of a writer of children's fiction I find a passage so full of resonance as I prepare to lead this document to a close. Mahy, for many years a librarian as well as a writer, commented: "Being a librarian forces you to think a lot about truth and to pretend you have got over any confusion you might ever have had about it" (p.31). Perhaps *researcher* might be substituted for *librarian* and the same claim made: *being a researcher forces you to think a lot about truth and to pretend you have got over any confusion you might ever have had about it.* For how does one draw together an account that at once makes truth claims and recognises their contingency? While her childhood Christmas was spent swimming in a New Zealand summer, Mahy wrote, her Christmas reading was of "snow and robins and holly": she lived in the Pacific yet was nurtured by a northern literature. My own professional history is similar: I have lived in a local counselling culture and in the absence of a local literature I have read a literature written in a different clime about a different set of

[1] Margaret Mahy is a New Zealand writer of children's fiction who has won national and international awards and acclaim for her work.

professional conditions. That literature has contained both resonance and dissonance, both truth and fantasy. It has provided storylines by which my professional life has been enriched. And my (dis)location has also made visible to me the ways in which the storylines of that literature, and of that supervision literature, do not tell all there is to be told. For example, its categories - novices and neophytes and master practitioners - do not fit. Nor do its categorical claims ring true: as neither counsellor nor supervisor have I experienced supervisors having responsibility for clients and their wellbeing and for counsellors and their wellbeing, as Borders and Leddick (1987) constructed things.

When later I read the narrative therapy literature produced in Australia and New Zealand a sense of professional dislocation became more apparent. The fault line produced through the meeting of systems of thought was something like the geological instability of the meeting of tectonic plates that produces this country's landscape. Like the landscape of this country the landscape of narrative therapy is an intensely interesting one, produced at a disjuncture where the certainties of modernist psychology came up and come up against the uncertainties and multiplicities of postmodernism. In counselling, these uncertainties have been expressed particularly in the critique offered by indigenous and feminist voices asking questions about power and categories and institution and exclusion. In this unstable landscape narrative therapy makes sense to me. And it remains contingent: the local professional culture in which I work and write includes considerable diversity. And it is a local culture that is always partly spoken in terms of a diverse international professional culture. As we produce a local professional literature in supervision I hope that it will be in reference (but not deference) to a world literature, and that we will recognise that our positions are contingent rather than categorical ones.

The account I have produced in this document is a contingent one, not a categorical one: the claims I have made are particularly located. Hopes for the development of counselling supervision in New Zealand were expressed by McConkey:

> Supervision needs attention. It needs to be talked about, examined, read about and understood. Our own historical development of supervision requires researching and documenting, so that a genuine New Zealand-based version of the discipline is developed, rather than merely 'transplanting' something from the northern hemisphere. (1999, p.82)

This account is *a* genuinely New Zealand version: other, differently genuine, New Zealand versions will no doubt follow. This account is a New Zealand version produced in relation with a number of fault lines. In Chapter One I located our counsellor education programme: its history is in eclectic approaches to counselling and guidance in education and its present is in narrative therapy. This project has called on the fields of both counselling and family therapy. As I have written this account I have noticed my bi-location in not being able to write as though my audience was located in only one or the other of those fields. Similarly, as I have written I have heard readers of a postmodern vein responding with an, "Of course," as though what I write does not need saying again. But I have not assumed that this account addresses only such an audience: to do so would be to deny the realities of the varied professional landscape in this small professional community where other systems of thought produce the accounts of practice that occupy the centre ground. It would also be to deny my own migration of professional identity and my interest in producing dialogue in diversity. Modernist and postmodern practice meet and come up against each other in daily practice, as in this document. Other fault lines, in particular my positioning as both researcher and practitioner and as both participant and researcher, have influenced my "power to perceive". Like Mahy, I have, of course, not been able to see everything all at once.

Most significantly what I have seen is that the question of responsibility in supervision is problematised by this investigation. Questions of the production of professional responsibility in supervision need ongoing investigation and professional debate. As well, there are theoretical questions about the counsellor as professional subject that warrant a deeper theoretical analysis. In particular, there is room to investigate the question of the cultural locatedness of my interest

in a first person subject, storying, professing, accounting for and producing their counselling practice in the work of supervision.

Storying research practice

In Chapter One I introduced the two stories that would be threaded through this document. Firstly there was the story that I set out to tell: that story is the story of how narrative therapists might practice as narrative supervisors. Secondly, there was the story of how I produced myself as a researcher. As a narrative therapist I was familiar with employing the strategy of disclosing my thinking about my thinking (Weingarten, 1992) in my work. It is a strategy that pays attention to the power relations of our work: I do not assume the authority of my question but make my own positioning available for investigation. I have brought that strategy, one that I claim to be an ethical stance, to this work of producing myself as a researcher. I could not leave my research practice working invisibly behind the scenes of my first three research questions, for answers that I might produce were contingent upon my positioning. My location made some possibilities visible to me and left others obscured. Most visible was an emphasis on practice. Practice relevance was an important criterion for me. In what I now regard as an elegant move, the reflecting team, a therapeutic device, was the device with which I gained access to the field of study. I make the claim for elegance as research and practice came to sit so easily together. Not only was practice made accessible to research but research was made accessible to practice. A reflecting team is a community of collaborative practice. As researcher, I was positioned for collaborative research of practice in practice, as a *member* of the reflecting team. The possibilities for the reflecting team as a research and practice site have been exposed in this study: the reflecting team process is ripe for further exploration as a research tool. It is one to which I shall return as I continue to develop my research practice.

In retrospect the research design might have been enhanced if I had planned for clearer and more structured involvement of the participants in the data analysis. I might have done this in a number of ways. I might have given more emphasis to the reflective aspects of the project and less to the practice aspects during the life of the group. To have done that I would have needed to bring more rigour to

positioning myself as researcher. In seeking collaboration in the data-generating phase, I did not position myself as well as I might have to guide the research process. As well, the design of the study and my own immersion in practice meant that most of the analytic work has happened since the group stopped meeting. On reflection I would have liked to have included the group in the process of deepening the analysis. That would have served the research task better. However, I accept that I erred on the side of serving the practice well: participants' professional practice was enhanced through their participation. A richer engagement in data analysis with participants is a possibility to explore in future research.

I have found it hard to accept, too, that much of the productivity of this project is invisible in this thesis document. While I have been working to write this document in my everyday professional life in teaching and supervision I have been using and going beyond the ideas and practices that the project produced. To write about these practices is beyond what I have ethical permission to do. However, I record that this project has been taken forward in the practices of all its participants – and in the practices of many of those with whom they have worked. In the counsellor education programme in which I teach reflecting team practices have been introduced in a number of courses as a consequence of this project. In the most recent development, final year Masters students are working in peer reflecting team consultation groups in an e-forum; their work has been a delight for me to observe. Subsequent to the research group, some of us set up a different reflecting team supervision group, and those participants have gone on and used these processes in their own practices. In these ways the project has been, as I hoped, a servant of practice. My work as I generated data has served practice well. While I have not held myself at the centre of either the knowledge production process or the knowledge produced, I do have a number of contingent stories to tell about the project. Those stories return me to that first story I introduced in this thesis document, the one I set out to tell about narrative approaches in counselling supervision.

A story of supervision practice

My interest in an account of supervision was a local one, particularly situated in counselling, in constructionist practice, and in New Zealand. I do not think the value of the study's findings is limited to this particular location, but I do acknowledge the locatedness of the study. That locatedness is both a strength and a limitation of this study. I am happy to argue for this version of supervision as a contingent one, recognising that the positions I take will raise questions for those for whom supervisor responsibility signifies the foundation of the counselling profession's claims to professional accountability. I prefer a more complex understanding of the professional subject than the discourse of supervisor responsibility offers. Counsellors and supervisors are multiply positioned as we produce the practices of disciplinary power. We are accountable for the work we do, but the terms of that accounting are complex, and to serve practice well I believe that we need to keep this complexity visible, rather than assume that somehow supervisors can ensure safe counselling practice. I argue that it takes a community of practitioners for the work of ethical practice. I locate my work in relation with a community of practice, recognising that while it will be both similar to and different from the work of others, it exists only in professional community. It is the community of practice that has produced and used the narrative metaphor as a mode of therapy that has made possible the account I offer here.

The narrative metaphor expands the professional practice of supervision as significantly as it has expanded the possibilities for therapy. With an emphasis on the ethics of relationship narrative supervision unsettles the familiar unilateral construction of relationship and production of responsibility and knowledge. It disturbs the marginalised positions counsellors are offered in dominant supervision discourse. In disturbing, it works to highlight positions that counsellors might take up as ethical and moral agents in supervision, emphasising that it is in the work of a collaborative supervision relationship that ethical effectiveness for counselling practice is enhanced. Through deconstruction counsellors and supervisors attend to relations and practices of power in both supervision discourse and counselling discourse. Through deconstruction we

investigate the authorities by which knowledge is produced and knowledge claims made. I argue that storying the locations of our own practices is critical to supervision, for it is in this way that we negotiate and acknowledge, in community, the moral orders we produce and reproduce in our counselling work. We come to understand the contingency of our claims when they are located in these ways as we story our professional identities in relation with professional knowledge and theories of knowledge. We observe our own constitution as professional subjects, participating in professional self-government at the same time as we unsettle its practices. In supervision we engage in dialogue in the domains of pleasure, imagination, epistemology, ethics, politics, justice and morality. Our focus is the relationships with our professional selves thus produced, and so the relationships with our professional colleagues and communities, and most importantly the relationships we offer clients. For it is to position ourselves well for ethical and effective counselling practice that as counsellors we engage in professional supervision.

> And, if after we have written, the text enters into others' dialogic encounters, then how can we claim to be the final arbiters of meaning for something whose meaning is so open-ended. (Sampson, 1985, p.1208)

References

Abbott, P., & Wallace, C. (1990). The sociology of the caring professions: An introduction. In P. Abbott & C. Wallace (Eds.), *The sociology of the caring professions* (pp. 1-9). Basingstoke: Falmer.

Amundson, J., Webber, Z., & Stewart, K. (2000). How narrative therapy might avoid the same damn thing over and over. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 19*(4), 20-31.

Andersen, T. (1987). The reflecting team: Dialogue and meta-dialogue in clinical work. *Family Process, 26*, 415-428.

Andersen, T. (1989). Back and forth and beyond. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 10*(2), 75-76.

Andersen, T. (Ed.). (1991). *The reflecting team: Dialogues and dialogues about the dialogues.* New York: Norton.

Andersen, T. (1995). Reflecting processes; Acts of informing and forming: You can borrow my eyes but you must not take them away from me! In S. Friedman (Ed.), *The reflecting team in action: Collaborative practice in family therapy* (pp. 11-37). New York: Guilford.

Anderson, H. (1997). *Conversation, language, and possibilities: A postmodern approach to therapy.* New York: Basic Books.

Anderson, H., & Goolishian, H. (1992). The client is the expert: A not-knowing approach to therapy. In S. McNamee & K. J. Gergen (Eds.), *Therapy as social construction* (pp. 25-39). London: Sage.

Anderson, H., & Goolishian, H. (1988). Human systems as linguistic systems: Preliminary and evolving ideas about the implications for clinical theory. *Family Process, 26,* 415-428.

Anderson, H., & Swim, S. (1995). Supervision as collaborative conversation: Connecting the voices of supervisor and supervisee. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(2), 1-13.

Anderson, R. (1991). Counselling: A practice in search of an explanation. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 13*(1), 2-11.

Atweh, B., Kemmis, S., & Weeks, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Action research in practice: Partnerships for social justice in education.* London: Routledge.

Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 1997, 18(3), [cover].

Bacigalupe, G. (1998). Cross-cultural systemic therapy training and consultation: A postcolonial view. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 17* (10), 31-44.

Bahrick, A. S., Russell, R. K., & Salmi, S. W. (1991). The effects of role induction on trainees' perceptions of supervision. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 69,* 434-438.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). Discourse in the novel. In M. Holquist (Ed.), C. Emerson & M. Holquist (Trans.), *The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (pp. 259-422). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). The problem of the text. In C. Emerson & M. Holquist (Eds.), V. W. McGee (Trans.), *Speech genres and other late essays* (pp.103-131). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I, Taylor, M., & Tindall, C. (Eds.). (1994). *Qualitative methods in psychology.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Barrett, R. (2001, May). From the Chairperson. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors, Waikato Branch Newsletter*,1-2.

Barretta-Herman, A. (2001). Fulfilling the commitment to competent social work practice through supervision. In L. Beddoe & Worrall, J. (Eds.). *From rhetoric to reality: Supervision conference* (pp. 1-10). Auckland: Auckland College of Education.

Bernard J. M., & Goodyear, R. K. (1998). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Biever, J. L., & Gardner, G. T. (1995). The use of reflecting teams in social constructionist training. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(3), 47-56.

Bird, J. (1993). Coming out of the closet: Illuminating the therapeutic relationship. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 5*(2), 47-64.

Bird, J. (1994). Talking amongst ourselves. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter* (1), 44-46.

Bird, J. (2000). *The heart's narrative: Therapy and navigating life's contradictions.* Auckland: Edge Press.

Bird L., & Drewery, W. (2000). *Human development in Aotearoa: A journey through life.* Auckland: McGraw-Hill.

Blocher, D. H. (1983). Toward a cognitive developmental approach to counselling supervision. *The Counseling Psychologist, 11*(1), 27-34.

Bobele, M., Gardner, G., & Biever, J. (1995). Supervision as social construction. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(2), 14-25.

Borders, L. D. (1991). A systematic approach to peer group supervision. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 69,* 248-252.

Borders, L. D., Bernard, J. B., Dye, H. A., Fong, M. L. , Henderson, P., & Nance, D. W. (1991). Curriculum guide for training counseling supervisors: Rationale, development and implementation. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 31*(1), 58-80.

Borders, L. D., & Leddick, G. R. (1987). *Handbook of counselling supervision.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Counsellor Education and Supervision.

Bradley, L. J. (Ed.). (1989). *Counselor supervision: Principles, process, practice.* Muncie, IN: Accelerated Publishers.

British Association for Counselling. (1996). *Code of ethics and practice for the supervision of counsellors.* Rugby: Author.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds: Possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bubenzer, D., West, J., & Gold, J. (1991). Use of live supervision in counsellor preparation. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 30*(4), 301-308.

Bunce, J. (1992). Counselling research and practice: The New Zealand experience. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 14*(2), 2-10.

Burkitt, I. (1999). Between the dark and the light: Power and the material contexts of social relations. In D. J. Nightingale & J. Crombie (Eds.), *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice* (pp. 69-82). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Burman, E. (1992). Identification and power in feminist therapy: A reflexive history of a discourse analysis. *Women's Studies International Forum, 15*, 487-498.

Burman, E. (1994). *Deconstructing developmental psychology.* London: Routledge.

Burman, E. (1994). Interviewing. In P.Banister, E.Burman, I. Parker, M. Taylor, & C. Tindall (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in psychology*, (pp. 49-71). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Burman, E. (1995) Identification, subjectivity, and power in feminist psychotherapy. In J. Siegfried, (Ed.), *Therapuetic and everyday discourse as behaviour change: Towards a micro-analysis in psychotherapy process research* (pp. 469-489). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Burman, E., Aitken, G, Alldred, P., Allwood, R., Billington, T., Goldberg, B., Lopez, A. G., Heenan, C., Marks, D., & Warner, S. (1996). *Psychology discourse practice: From regulation to resistance.* London: Taylor & Francis.

Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism.* London: Routledge.

Candlin, C. N. (1997). General editor's preface. In B. Gunnarsson, P.Linell, & B Nordberg (Eds.), *The construction of professional discourse* (pp. viii-xiv). London: Longman.

Cantwell, P. (1997). Towards a national association of counsellors and psychotherapists. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 18*(3), 165-8.

Cantwell, P., & Holmes, S. (1995). Cumulative process: A collaborative approach to systemic supervision. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(2), 35-46.

Carifio, M. S., & Hess, A. K. (1987). Who is the ideal supervisor? *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18,* 244-250.

Carroll, M. (1996). *Counselling supervision: Theory, skills and practice.* London: Cassell.

Chaiklin, S. (1992). From theory to practice and back again: What does postmodern philosophy contribute to psychological science. In S. Kvale, (Ed.), *Psychology and postmodernism* (pp. 194-208). London: Sage.

Chamberlain, J. (1993). Connectivity in counselling research. In R. Manthei (Ed.), *Reducing distance in counselling: Cultural, social, and psychological. Proceedings, International Round Table for the Advancement of Counselling & New Zealand Association of Counsellors,* (pp. 47-57). Christchurch: University of Canterbury.

Chasin, R, Herzig, M., Roth, S., Chasin, L., Becker, C., & Stains, R., Jr. (1996). From diatribe to dialogue on divisive public issues: Approaches drawn from family therapy. *Mediation Quarterly, 13*, 323-344.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 413-427). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, W., Jankowski, P., Margee, & Springer, N. (2000). Searching for a fit: Utilizing a co-research team as a qualitative method of analysis. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 19*(2), 56-64.

Clarkson, P. (1998). Writing as research in counselling psychology and related disciplines. In P. Clarkson, (Ed.), *Counselling psychology: Integrating theory, research and supervised practice* (pp. 300-307). London: Routledge.

Clarkson, P., & Aviram, O. (1998). Phenomenological research on supervision: Supervisors reflect on 'Being a supervisor'. In P. Clarkson, (Ed.),

Counselling psychology: Integrating theory, research and supervised practice (pp. 273-299). London: Routledge.

Cobb, S. (1993). Empowerment and mediation: A narrative perspective. *Negotiation Journal, 9*, 245-259.

Collin, A. (1996). Re-thinking the relationship between theory and practice: practitioners as map-readers, map-makers - or jazz players? *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24*, 67-82.

Corey, M.S., & Corey, G. (1992). *Groups process and practice.* Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Cox, J. A. (1997). *Use of reflecting teams in counselor supervision: Supervisees' and supervisors' perceptions.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kent State University, Ohio.

Cox, J. A., & L'Amoreaux, N. A. (1998). Tom Andersen's comments on reflecting processes and some observations on reflecting practices in supervision. In J. D. West, D. L. Bubenzer, & J. Bitter (Eds.), *Social construction in couple and family therapy* (pp. 123-133). Arlington, VA: American Counseling Association.

Crocket, K. (1997, November). *Generativity in supervision: Reflection and research in narrative mode.* Paper presented at the Western Association for Counsellor Education and Supervision, Santa Barbara, CA.

Crocket, K. (1998a, March). *Authorities in supervision.* Paper presented at the New Zealand Association of Counsellors Annual Conference, Waitangi, New Zealand.

Crocket, K. (1998b). The great taping debate: A response to the Mad Hatter and others. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter, 19*(3), 41-43.

Crocket, K. (1999a). Supervision: A site of authority production. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 20*, 75-83. [Unapproved editorial changes corrected as: Errata (2000), *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 21*, 85-87.]

Crocket, K. (1999b). Supervision: What kind of working alliance is it? In *A place to stand: Proceedings of New Zealand Association of Counsellors 25th Conference* (pp. 181-187). Hamilton: Waikato Branch, New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

Crocket, K. (in press). Producing supervision, and ourselves as counsellors and supervisors: A narrative letter. In M. Mcmahon & W. Patton (Eds.), *Supervision in the helping professions: A practical guide.* Melbourne: Pearson Education.

Crocket, K., & McKenzie, W. (1996). Co-authoring supervision. Unpublished manuscript, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.

D'Andrea, M. (1989). Person-process model of supervision: A developmental approach. In L. Bradley (Ed.), *Counselor supervision: Principles, process, practice* (pp. 257-298). Muncie, IN: Accelerated Publishers.

Davies, B. (1991). The concept of agency. *Postmodern Critical Theorising, 30,* 42-53.

Davies, B. (1998). Psychology's subject: A commentary on the relativism/realism debate. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Social constructionism, discourse and realism* (pp. 133-145). London: Sage.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive positioning of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 20*(1), 43-63.

Davidson, J., & Lusardi, D. J. (1991). Reflecting dialogues in supervision and training. In T. Andersen (Ed.), *The reflecting team: Dialogues and dialogues about the dialogues* (pp. 143-154). New York: Norton.

Deck, M., & Morrow, J. (1989). Supervision: An interpersonal relationship. In L. Bradley (Ed.), *Counselor supervision: Principles, process, practice* (pp. 35-62). Muncie, IN: Accelerated Publishers.

Denzin, N. (1994). The art and politics of interpretation. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 500-515). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Doan, R. (1998). The king is dead, long live the king: Narrative therapy and practicing what we preach. *Family Process, 37,* 379-385.

Doan, R., & Bullard, C. (1994). Reflecting teams: Exploring the possibilities. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter,* (4), 35-38.

Doehrman, M. J. (1976). Parallel processes in supervision and psychotherapy. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 40*(1), 3-104.

Drewery, W. (2001). Response to Wendy Hollway's review of G.Monk, J. Winslade, K.Crocket, & D.Epston (Eds.) (1997), Narrative Therapy in Practice. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology,* 11(4), 323-324.

Drewery, W., & Winslade, J. (1997).The theoretical story of narrative therapy. In G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket, & D. Epston, (Eds.). *Narrative therapy in practice: The archaeology of hope* (pp. 32-52). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Drewery, W., Winslade, J., & Monk, G. (2000). Resisting the dominating story: Toward a deeper understanding of narrative therapy. In J. Raskin & R.

Neimeyer (Eds.), Constructions of disorder (pp. 243-264). Washington DC: Amercian Psychological Association.

Drewery, W. & McKenzie, W. (1999). Therapy and faith. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Deconstructing psychotherapy* (pp. 132-149). London: Sage.

Edwards, D. (1997). Supervision today: The psychoanalytic legacy. In G. Shipton (Ed.), *Supervision of psychotherapy and counselling: Making a place to think* (pp. 11-23). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992). *Discursive psychology.* London: Sage.

Egan, G. (1994). *The skilled helper: A problem management approach to helping* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Ellis, M. V. (1991). Research in clinical supervision: Revitalizing a scientific agenda. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 30,* 238-251.

Ellis, M. V., Dell, D. M., & Good, G. E. (1988). Counselor trainees' perceptions of supervisor roles : Two studies testing the dimensionality of supervision. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 35,* 315-324.

Ellis, M. V., & Douce, L. A. (1994). Group supervision of novice clinical supervisors: Eight recurring issues. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 72,* 520-525.

Epston, D. (1989). *Collected papers.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Epston, D., & White, M. (1992). *Experience, contradiction, narrative and imagination.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Etherington, K. (1996). The counsellor as researcher: Boundary issues and critical dilemmas. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24,* 339-346.

Esler, I. (2001). Registration: What are the choices? Is there a choice? *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter, 21*(2), 29.

Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis.* London: Longman.

Farrell, W. (1993). Integrating theory and practice in brief counselling by research. In R. Manthei (Ed.), *Reducing distance in counselling: Cultural, social and psychological. Conference proceedings, International Round Table for the Advancement of Counselling & New Zealand Association of Counsellors,* (pp.91-94). Christchurch: University of Canterbury.

Feltham, C. (2000). Counselling supervision: Baselines, problems, and possibilities. In B. L. Lawton & C. Feltham (Eds.), *Taking supervision*

forward: Enquiries and trends in counselling and psychotherapy (pp. 5-24). London: Sage.

Feltham, C., & Dryden, W. (1994). *Developing counsellor supervision.* London: Sage.

Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In N. K Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 70-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fine, Marshall. & Turner, J. (1997). Collaborative supervision: Minding the power. In T. C. Todd & C. L. Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 229-240). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Flaskas, C. (1999). Limits and possibilities of the postmodern self. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 20* (1), 20-27.

Flaskas, C. (2000). Narrative and family therapy: On passion, pragmatism and politics. [Contribution to *Dialogues of diversity in therapy: A virtual symposium*]. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 21*(3), 121-124.

Flaskas, C., Stagoll, B., Larner, G., Hart, B., Doan, R., Weingarten, K., Loth, W., Hayward, M., & Pocock, D. (2000). Dialogues of diversity in therapy: A virtual symposium. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 21*(3), 121-143.

Flemons, D. G., Green, S. K. , & Rambo, A. H. (1996). Evaluating therapists' practices in a postmodern world: A discussion and a scheme. *Family Process, 35*, 43-56.

Flintoff, V. (1997) . *Effects of supervision on emergent professional identity: Experiences of student-counsellors.* Unpublished masters thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Fornet-Betancourt, R., Becker, H., & Gomez-Müller, A. (1988). The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom: An interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984 [j. d. Gauthier trans.]. In J. Bernauer & D. Rasmussen (Eds.), *The Final Foucault.* Cambridge, MA: MIT.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge* [A. Sheridan Smith Trans.]. London: Tavistock. (Original work published 1969).

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* [A. Sheridan, Trans.]. New York: Pantheon. (Original work published 1975).

Foucault, M. (1989). *The birth of the clinic: An archaeology of medical perception* [A. Sheridan, Trans.]. London: Routledge. (Original work published 1963).

Freedman J., & Combs, G. (1996). *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities*. New York: Norton.

Freidson, E. (1986). *Professional powers: A study of the institutionalization of formal knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frick, W. B. (1971). Humanistic psychology: Interviews with Maslow, Murphy, and Rogers. Columbus, OH:Merrill

Friedlander, M. L., & Snyder J. (1983). Trainees' expectations for the supervisory process: Testing a developmental model. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 22,* 342-349.

Friedman, S. Opening reflections. In S. Friedman (Ed.), *The reflecting team in action: Collaborative practice in family therapy* (pp. 1-7). New York: Guilford.

Gale, J., & Newfield, N. (1992). A conversational analysis of a solution-focused marital family therapy session. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 18*, 153-165.

Gavey, N. (1989). Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 13*, 459-475.

Gardner, G. L, Bobele, M., & Biever, J. L. (1997). Postmodern models of family therapy supervision. In T. C. Todd & C. L. Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 217-228). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Geertz, C. (1986). Epilogue: Making experiences, authoring selves. In V. Turner & E. Bruner (Eds.), *The anthropology of experience* (pp. 373-380). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1985).The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist, 40*, 266-275.

Gergen, K. J. (1991). *The saturated self.* New York: Basic Books.

Gergen, K. J. (1994). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gergen, K. (1996). Theory under threat: Social construction and identity politics. In C. Tolman, F. Cherry, & R. van Hezewijk (Eds.), *Problems of theoretical psychology* (pp. 13-23). North York, Canada: Captus University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1998). Constructionism and realism: How are we to go on? In I. Parker (Ed.), *Social constructionism, discourse and realism* (pp. 147-155). London: Sage.

Glidden, C. E., & Tracey, T. J. (1992). A multidimensional scaling analysis of supervisory dimensions and their perceived relevance across trainee experience levels. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 23*, 151-157.

Gorman, P., Lockerman, G., & Giffels, P. (1995). Conversations outside the clinic: Video-reflecting teams for in-home therapy and supervision. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(4), 1-15.

Grafanaki, S. (1996). How research can change the researcher: The need for sensitivity, flexibility and ethical boundaries in conducting qualitative research in counselling/psychotherapy. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24*, 329-338.

Granello, D. H., Beamish, P.M., & Davis, T.E. (1997). Supervisee empowerment: Does gender make a difference? *Counselor Education and Supervision, 36*, 305-317.

Grant, B. (1995). Membership and accountability. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter, 16* (2), 15-16.

Griffith, J., & Griffith, M. (1992). Owning one's epistemological stance in therapy. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter,* (1), 5-11.

Hall, C., Serangi, S., & Slembrouck, S. (1997). Moral construction in social work discourse. In B.-L. Gunnarsson, P. Linell, & B. Nordberg (Eds.), *The construction of professional discourse* (pp. 265-291). London: Longman.

Hall, S. (1996). Introduction: Who needs identity? In S. Hall & P. du Gay, (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (pp. 1-17). London: Sage.

Halliday, J. (1999). Policing – or professionalism? *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter, 20*(1), 3.

Hanrahan, M. (1998). Academic growth through action research: A doctoral student's narrative. In B. Atweh, S. Kemmis, P. Weeks (Eds.), *Action research in practice: Partnerships for social justice in education* (pp. 302-326). London: Routledge.

Hardy, K. (1993). Live supervision in the postmodern era of family therapy: Issues, reflections, and questions. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 15*(1), 9-20.

Hare-Mustin, R. (1994). Discourses in the mirrored room: A postmodern analysis of therapy. *Family Process, 33*, 19-35.

Harré, R. (1995). Agentive discourse. In R. Harré & P. Stearns (Eds.), *Discursive Psychology in Practice* (pp. 120-136). London: Sage.

Harré, R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood.* London: Sage.

Harré, R. (1999). Discourse and the embodied person. In D. J. Nightingale & J. Cromby (Eds.), *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice* (pp. 97-112). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Harré, R. (2000). Personalism in the context of a social constructionist psychology. *Theory and Psychology, 10*, 731-748.

Harré, R., & Gillett, G. (1994). *The discursive mind.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hart, N., & Crawford-Wright, A. (1999). Research as therapy, therapy as research: Ethical dilemmas in new paradigm research. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 27*, 205-214.

Hawkins, P., & Shohet, R. (1989). *Supervision in the helping professions.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Hawkins P., & Shohet, R. (1991). Approaches to the supervision of counsellors. In W. Dryden & B. Thorne (Eds.), *Training and supervision for counselling in action* (pp. 99-115). London: Sage.

Hepburn, A. (1999). Derrida and psychology: Deconstruction and its ab/uses in critical and discursive psychologies. *Theory and Psychology, 9*, 639-665.

Heppner, P. P., & Anderson, W.P. (1985). On the perceived non-utility of research in counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 63,* 545-547.

Hermansson, G. (1981). Introduction to 'supervision'. In G. Hermansson (Ed.), *Guidance in New Zealand secondary schools: Issues and programmes* (pp. 267-268). New Zealand Counselling & Guidance Association.

Hermansson, G. (1999). *Pieces of silver: Twenty five years of the New Zealand Counselling and Guidance Association/New Zealand Association of Counsellors, 1974-1999.* Hamilton: New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

Hess, A. K. (1987). Psychotherapy supervision: Stages, Buber and a theory of relationship. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18*, 251-259.

Hewson, D. (1992). Supervising counsellors. *The Australian Counselling Psychologist, 8* (1), 9-22.

Hodder, I. (1994). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 393-402). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Holloway, E. L. (1987). Developmental models of supervision: Is it development? *Professional Psychology Research and Practice, 18,* 203-216.

Holloway, E. (1995). *Clinical supervision: A systems approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Holloway, E., & Carroll, M. (1996). Reaction to the special section on supervision research: Comment on Ellis et al. (1996), Ladany et al. (1996), Neufeldt et al. (1996), and Worthen and McNeil (1996). *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 43,* 51-55.

Holloway, E., & Poulin, K. (1995). Discourse in supervision. In J. Siegfried (Ed.), *Therapeutic and everyday discourse as behavior change: Towards a micro-analysis in psychotherapy process research* (pp. 245-273). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hoshmand, L. T. (1994). *Orientation to inquiry in a reflective professional psychology.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hoshmand, L. T., & Martin, J. (Eds.) (1995). *Research as praxis: Lessons from programmatic research in therapeutic psychology.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Hoskins, M. L. (2000). Living research: The experience of researching self, other, and discourse. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 13,* 47-66.

Houston, G. (1995). *Supervision and counselling.* London: Rochester Foundation.

Howard, G. S. (1985). Can research in the human sciences become more relevant to practice? *Journal of Counseling and Development, 63,* 539-549.

Howard, G. S. (1991). Culture tales: A narrative approach to thinking, cross-cultural psychology, and psychotherapy. *American Psychologist, 46,* 187-197.

Ingleby, D. (1985). Professionals as socializers: The "psy complex". *Research in Law, Deviance and Social Control, 7,* 79-109.

Inskipp, F., & Proctor, B. (1993). *Making the most of supervision. Part one.* Twickenham: Cascade Publications.

Inskipp, F., & Proctor, B. (1995). *The art, craft, and tasks of counselling supervision: Becoming a supervisor.* Twickenham: Cascade Publications.

Irving, J. A., & Williams, D. I. (1995). Critical thinking and reflective practice in counselling. *British Journal of Guidance and Counsellling, 23,* 107-114.

Jacobs, M., & Bizley, P. (n.d.). *Supervision: A professional necessity* (Video). University of Leicester.

James, S., MacCormack, T., Korol, C, & Lee, C. (1996). Using reflecting teams in training psychology students in systemic therapy. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 15*(4), 46-58.

Janesick, V. (1994). The dance of qualitiative research design. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research design* (pp. 209-219). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jay, P. (1992, Fall). Bridging the gap: The position of politics in deconstruction. *Cultural Critique, 22*, 47-74.

Jenkins, A. (1990). Invitations to responsibility: the therapeutic engagement of men who are violent and abusive. Adelaide: Dulwich.

Jenkins, D. (1996). A reflecting team approach to family therapy: A delphi study. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 22*, 219-238.

Kagan, D. M. (1988). Research on the supervision of counselors- and teachers-in-training: Linking two bodies of literature. *Review of Educational Research, 58*, 1-24.

Kaiser, T. L. (1992). The supervisory relationship: An identification of the primary elements in the relationship and an application of two theories of ethical relationships. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 18, 283-296.

Kaiser, T.L. (1997). *Supervisory relationships: Exploring the human element.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Kaye, J. (1990). Toward meaningful research in psychotherapy. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, (2) 27-38.

Kaye, J. (1999). Toward a non-regulative praxis. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Deconstructing psychotherapy* (pp. 19-38). London: Sage.

Kemmis, S., & Wilkinson, M. (1998). Participatory action research and the study of practice. In B. Atweh, S. Kemmis, & P. Weeks (Eds.), Action research in practice: Partnerships for social justice in education (pp. 21-36). London: Routledge.

King, D., & Wheeler, S. (1999). The responsibilities of counsellor supervisors: A qualitative study. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 27*, 215-228.

Kogan, S. M., & Gale, J. M. (1997). Decentering therapy: Textual analysis of a narrative therapy session. *Family Process, 36,* 101-126.

Kurpius, D., Gibson, G., Lewis, J. & Corbet, M. (1992). Ethical issues in supervising counseling practitioners. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 31*, 48-57.

Lambert, M. J., & Arnold, R. C. (1987). Research and the supervisory process. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18*, 217-224.

Lambert, P. (1989/90, Summer). Live supervision: The co-evolution of a learning context. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, 15-19.

Lampert, M. (2000). Knowing teaching: The intersection of research on teaching and qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review, 70*, 86-99.

Landis, L. L., & Young, M. E. (1994). The reflecting team in counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 32*, 210-218.

Lappin, J., & Hardy, K. V. (1997). Keeping context in view: The heart of supervision. In T. C. Todd & C. L Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 41-58). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Larner, G. (1995). The real as illusion: Deconstructing power in family therapy. *Journal of Family Therapy, 17*, 191-217.

Larner, G. (1999a). Derrida and the deconstruction of power as context and topic in therapy. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Deconstructing psychotherapy* (pp. 39-53). London: Sage.

Larner, G. (1999b, May). *Towards a critical psychotherapy: Institutional humility.* Paper presented at MilleniumWorld Conference on Critical Psychology, Sydney.

Lather, P. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern.* New York: Routledge.

Lax, W. D. (1991). The reflecting team and the initial consultation. In T. Andersen (Ed.), *The reflecting team: Dialogues and dialogues about the dialogues* (pp. 127-142). New York: Norton.

Lax, W. D. (1995). Offering reflections: Some theoretical and practical considerations. In S. Friedman (Ed.), *The reflecting team in action: Collaborative practice in family therapy* (pp. 145-166). New York: Guilford.

Liddle, H. A., & Saba, G. W. (1983). On context replication: The isomorphic relationship of training and therapy. *Journal of Strategic and Systemic Therapies, 2*, 3-11.

Lincoln, Y. S. (1997). Self, subject, audience and text: Living at the edge, writing in the margins. In W. G. Tierney & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.),

Representation and the text: Reframing the narrative voice (pp. 37-56). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Littrell, J. M., Lee-Borden, N. , & Lorenz, J. R. (1979). A developmental framework for counseling supervision. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 19,* 13-19.

Loganbill, C., Hardy, E., & Delworth, U. (1982). Supervision: A conceptual model. *The Counseling Psychologist, 10,* 3-42.

Løvlie, L. (1992). Postmodernism and subjectivity. In S. Kvale (Ed.), *Psychology and postmodernism* (pp. 119-133). London: Sage.

Lowe, R. (1999). Between the 'no longer' and the 'not yet': Postmodernism as a context for critical therapeutic work. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Deconstructing psychotherapy* (pp. 71-85). London: Sage.

Lowe, R. (2000). Supervising self-supervision: Constructive inquiry and embedded narratives in case consultation. *Journal of Family and Marital Therapy, 26,* 511-521.

Lowe, R., & Guy, G. (1996). A reflecting team format for solution-oriented supervision: Practical guidelines and theoretical distinctions. *Journal of Systemic Therapies 15*(4), 26-45.

Lowe, R., & Guy, G. (1999). From group to peer supervision: A reflecting team process. *Pyschotherapy in Australia 6,* 36-41.

Luke, A. (1999). The jig is up: An alternative history of psychology or why current concepts of identity and development are part of the problem rather than part of the solution. In *A place to stand: Proceedings of New Zealand Association of Counsellors 25th Conference* (pp. 26-38). Hamilton: Waikato Branch, New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

MacKinnon, L. (1986). Supervision and supervision of supervision: One perspective. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 7*(3), 133-139.

Mad Hatter (1999). Welcome to the tea party. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Newsletter, 19*(5), 16.

Madigan, S., & Epston, D. (1995). From "spy-chiatric gaze" to communities of concern: From professional monologue to dialogue. In S. Friedman (Ed.), *The reflecting team in action* (pp. 257-276). New York: Guilford.

Mahy, M. (2000). A dissolving ghost: Essays and more. Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Manthei, R. (1981). The process of counselling supervision. *New Zealand Counselling and Guidance Association Journal, 3*(2), 40-46.

Manthei, R. (1995). Debate. [Letter to Editor]. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Newsletter, 16*(3), 6-7.

Manthei R. (1996). Thinking about counselling supervision. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 18(1)*, 33-35.

Manthei R. (1997). Renewing membership: Who measures up? *New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Newsletter, 18*(2), 12-13.

Manthei, R. (1997). *Counselling: The skills of finding solutions to problems.* Auckland: Longman.

Manthei, R. J., & Miller, J. (1991). New Zealand counselling, therapy and guidance-related literature, 1980-1989: A bibliography. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 13*(1), 35-71.

Manthei, R. J., & Miller, J. (2000). *Good counselling: A guide for clients.* Auckland: Pearson Education.

Martin, J. S., Goodyear, R. K., & Newton, F. B. (1987). Clinical supervision: An intensive case study. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18*, 225-235.

McConkey, P. (1999). *The training of supervisors of counsellors and psychotherapists in the United Kingdom.* Wellington: Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

McConkey, P. (2001). Supervision forum. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Newsletter, 22* (1), 25-27.

McKenzie, W. H. (1993). Therapeutic conversations: Strong Christian beliefs and the respectful reauthoring of lives. Unpublished masters thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

McLean, C. (1995a). Reclaiming our stories, reclaiming our lives. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter,* (1), 1-40.

McLean, C. (1995b). Speaking out and being heard. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter,* (4), 3-56.

McLeod, J. (1996). Qualitative approaches to research in counselling and psychotherapy: Issues and challenges. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24*, 309-316.

McLeod, J. (1998). *An introduction to counselling.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

McNeill, B. W., & Stoltenberg, C. D. (1992). Agendas for developmental supervision research: A response to Borders. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 31*, 179-183.

McNamee, S., & Gergen, K. J. (Eds.). (1992). *Therapy as social construction.* London: Sage.

McNamee, S., & Gergen, K. J., and associates. (1999). *Relational responsibility: Resources for sustainable dialogue.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McWilliam, E. (1993). Post haste: Plodding research and galloping theory. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 14*(1), 199-205.

McWilliam, E. (1997). Performing between the posts: Authority, posture and contemporary feminist scholarship. In W. G. Tierney & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the text: Reframing the narrative voice* (pp. 219-252). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mearns, D. (1995). Supervision: A tale of the missing client. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 23*, 421-427.

Merttens, R. (1998). What is to be done? (With apologies to Lenin!). In I. Parker (Ed.), *Social constructionism, discourse and realism* (pp. 59-73). London: Sage.

Mellinger, W. (1995). Talk, power, and professionals: Partial repeats as challenges in the psychiatric interview. In J. Siegfried (Ed.), *Therapuetic and everyday discourse as behaviour change: Towards a micro-analysis in psychotherapy process research* (pp. 391-418). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Merl, H. (1995). Reflecting supervision. *Journal of Systemic Therapies,14*(2), 47-56.

Miller, G. (1997). Building bridges: The possibility of analytic dialogue between ethnography, conversation analysis and Foucault. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 24-44). London: Sage.

Miller, J. (1994). Professionalisation in counselling: Are we in danger of losing our way? *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 16*(2), 7-13.

Miller, N. and Crago, M. (1989). The supervision of two isolated practitioners. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 10*(1), 21-25.

Miller, P. (1992). Accounting and objectivity: The invention of calculating selves and calculable places. *Annals of Scholarship, 9*(1-2), 61-86.

Moje, E. (2000). Changing our minds, changing our bodies: Power as embodied in research relations. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(1), 25-42.

Mollon, P. (1997). Supervision as a space for thinking. In G. Shipton (Ed.), *Supervision of psychotherapy and counselling: Making a place to think* (pp .24-34). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Monk, G. (1997). How narrative therapy works. In G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket, & D. Epston, (Eds.), *Narrative therapy in practice: The archaeology of hope* (pp. 3-31). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Monk, G., & Drewery, W. (1994). The impact of social constructionist thinking on eclecticism in counsellor education: Some personal thoughts. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 16*(1), 5-14.

Monk, G., Winslade, J., Crocket, K., & Epston, D. (Eds.). (1997). *Narrative therapy in practice: The archaeology of hope.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Moon, J. (1999). *Reflection in learning and professional development: Theory and practice.* London: Kogan Page.

Moore, (1991). On being a supervisee. In W. Dryden & B. Thorne (Eds.), *Training and supervision for counselling in action.* London: Sage.

Morran, D. K., Kurpuis, D. J., Brack, C. J. , & Brack , G. (1995). A cognitive-skills model for counselor training and supervision. *Journal of Counselling and Development, 73*, 384-389.

Morris, J., Gawinski, B. A., & Joanning, H. (1994). The therapist-investigator relationship in family therapy research. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 13*(2), 24-28.

Morss, J. (1996). *Growing critical: Alternatives to developmental psychology.* London: Routledge.

Morss, J., & Nichterlein, M. (1999). Deconstructing therapeutic discourse. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Deconstructing psychotherapy* (pp. 164-174). London: Sage.

Munson, C. E. (1987). Sex roles and power relationships in supervision. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18,* 236-243.

Myerhoff, B. (1986). Life not death in Venice: Its second life. In V. Turner & E. Bruner (Eds.), *The anthropology of experience* (pp. 261-286). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Neal, J. H. (1996). Narrative therapy training and supervision. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 15*, 63-77.

Neufeldt, S. (1997). A social constructivist approach to counseling supervision. In T. Sexton & B. Griffin, (Eds.), *Social constructivist applications in*

counselling and supervision (pp. 191-210). Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press.

Neufeldt, S. A., Karno, M. P., & Nelson, M. L. (1996). A qualitative study of experts' conceptualization of supervisee reflectivity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 43*(1), 3-9.

New Zealand Association of Counsellors Handbook (2000). *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Code of Ethics.* (Available from New Zealand Association of Counsellors, P.O. Box 165, Hamilton.)

New Zealand Association of Counsellors Handbook (2000). *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Code of Supervision.* (Available from New Zealand Association of Counsellors, P.O. Box 165, Hamilton.)

New Zealand Association of Counsellors (2000-2001). *Annual Report.* (Available from New Zealand Association of Counsellors, P.O. Box 165, Hamilton.)

New Zealand Association of Counsellors (2001, March). *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Ethics Committee.* [Minutes of meeting]. (Available from New Zealand Association of Counsellors, P.O. Box 165, Hamilton.)

Nichols M. P., & Schwartz, R. C. (1995) *Family therapy: Concepts and methods.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

O'Donoghue, K. (1999). *Professional supervision practice under public management: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and service managers in the community probation service.* Unpublished MPhil thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North.

Ohye, B. (1998). Safeguarding wordless voice in a world of words. In C. G. Coll, J. Surrey, & K. Weingarten (Eds.), *Mothering against the odds: Diverse voices of contemporary mothers* (pp. 134-150). New York: Guilford.

Olk, M. E., & Friedlander, M. L. (1992). Trainees' experiences of role conflict and role ambiguity in supervisory relationships. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 39*, 389-397.

Paré, D. (1999a, May). *Discursive wisdom: Reflections on ethics and therapeutic knowledge.* Paper presented at MilleniumWorld Conference on Critical Psychology, Sydney.

Paré, D. (1999b). Towards a place to stand: The meeting of discourses in counsellor education. In *A place to stand: Proceedings of New Zealand Association of Counsellors 25th Conference* (pp. 88-95). Hamilton: Waikato Branch, New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

Paré, D. (1999c). Using reflecting teams in clinical training. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 34*, 293-306.

Parker, I. (1989). Discourse and power. In J. Shotter & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Texts of identity* (pp. 56-69). London: Sage.

Parker, I. (1991). *Discourse dynamics*. London: Routledge.

Parker, I. (1994). Discourse analysis. In In P. Banister, E. Burman, I. Parker, M. Taylor, &. C. Tindall (Eds.) (1994), *Qualitative methods in Psychology*, (pp. 92-107). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Parker, I. (1998a). Constructing and deconstructing psychotherapeutic discourse. *The European Journal of Psychotherapy, Counselling and Health, 1*, 65-78.

Parker, I. (Ed.). (1998b). *Social constructionism, discourse and realism*. London: Sage.

Parker, I. (Ed.). (1999a). *Deconstructing psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

Parker, I. (1999b). Introduction: Varieties of discourse and analysis. In I. Parker and the Bolton Discourse Network, *Critical textwork: An introduction to varieties of discourse analysis* (pp. 1-12). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Parker, I. (1999c). Critical reflexive humanism and critical constructionist psychology. In D. J. Nightingale & Cromby, J. (Eds.), *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice* (pp. 23-36). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Parry, A., & Doan, R. (1994). *Story revisions: Narrative therapy in the postmodern world.* New York: Guilford.

Penn, P., & Frankfurt, M. (1994). Creating a participant text, writing, multiple voices, narrative multiplicity. *Family Process, 33*(2), 17-23.

Perlesz, A., Young, J., Paterson, R., & Bridge, S. (1994). The reflecting team as a reflection of second order therapeutic ideals. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 15*(3), 117-127.

Phillips, T. (1999). Letters: Embracing letter writing within discourse analysis. In I. Parker and the Bolton Discourse Network, *Critical textwork: An introduction to varieties of discourse analysis* (pp. 29-39). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Pitts, J. H. (1992). Organising a practicum and internship program in counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 31*, 196-207.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Qualitative procedures for counseling. In C. E. Watkins, Jr., & L. J. Schneider (Eds.), *Research in counseling* (pp. 163-204). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1992). Postmodern epistomology of practice. In S. Kvale (Ed.), *Psychology and postmodernism* (pp. 146-165). London: Sage.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 8*(1), 5-23.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1997). Reporting qualitative research as practice. In W. G. Tierney & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the text: Reframing the narrative voice* (pp. 3-22). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2000). Psychological inquiry and the pragmatic and hermeneutic traditions. *Theory and Psychology, 10*, 453-479.

Potter, J. (1996). *Representing reality: Discourse, rhetoric, and social construction.* London: Sage.

Potter, J. (1997). Discourse analysis as a way of analysing naturally occurring talk. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 144-160). London: Sage.

Prieto, L. (1996). Group supervision: Still widely practiced but poorly understood. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 35*, 295-301.

Proctor, B. (1987). Supervision: A co-operative exercise in accountability. In M Marken & M. Payne (Eds.), *Enabling and ensuring: Supervision in practice* (pp. 21-34). Leicester: National Youth Bureau.

Proctor, B. (1994). Supervision - competence, confidence, accountability. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 22*, 309-318.

Protinsky, H. (1997). Dismounting the tiger: Using tape in supervision. In T. C. Todd & C. L Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp.298-307). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Public Conversations Project (1997). *The basics of our approach.* [Workshop handout]. (Available from Public Conversations Project, 46 Kondazian Street, Watertown, MA 02172)

Putney, M. W., Worthington, E. L., & McCullough M. E. (1992). Effects of supervisor and supervisee theoretical orientation and supervisor-supervisee matching on interns' perceptions of supervision. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 39*, 258-265.

Rabinow, P. (Ed.). (1984). *The Foucault reader.* New York: Pantheon.

Ramprogus, V. (1995). *The deconstruction of nursing*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Reason, P. (1988). *Human inquiry in action: Developments in new paradigm research*. London: Sage.

Reason, P. (1994). Three approaches in participative inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 324-339). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rennie, D. L. (1996). Fifteen years of doing qualitative research on psychotherapy. *British Journal of Guidance and Counsellling, 24*, 317-327.

Roberts, J. (1997). Reflecting processes and "supervision": Looking at ourselves as we work with others. In T. C. Todd & C.L. Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 334-348). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Robson, M., Cook, P., Hunt, K. Alred, G. (2000). Towards ethical decision-making in counselling research. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 28*, 533-547.

Ronnestad, M. H., & Skovholt, T. M. (1993). Supervision of beginning and advanced graduate students of counseling and psychotherapy. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 71*, 396-405.

Rose, N. (1989). Individualizing psychology. In J. Shotter and K. Gergen (Eds.), *Texts of identity* (pp.119-132). London: Sage.

Rose, N. (1991). *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self.* London: Routledge.

Rose, N. (1998). *Inventing ourselves: Psychology, power, and personhood.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenbaum, R., & Dyckman, J. (1998). No self? No problem! Actualising empty self in psychotherapy. In M. F. Hoyt (Ed.), *Constructive Therapies, Vol. 2* (pp. 238-274). New York: Guilford.

Sampson, E. E. (1985). The decentralization of identity: Toward a revised concept of personal and social order. *American Psychologist, 40*, 1203-1211.

Sampson, E. E. (1993). Identity politics: Challenges to psychology's understanding. *American Psychologist, 48*, 1219-1230.

Santa Rita, E. (1998). Solution-focused supervision. *The Clinical Supervisor, 17*, 127-139.

Schon, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner.* New York: Basic Books.

Schon, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Selekman, M., & Todd, T. (1995). Co-creating a context for change in the supervisory system: The solution-focused supervision model. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14,* 21-33.

Sells, S, Smith, T., Coe, M., Yoshioka, M., & Robbins, J. (1994). An ethnography of couple and therapist experiences in reflecting team practice. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 20,* 247-266.

Siegfried, J. (Ed.) (1995) *Therapeutic and everyday discourse as behavior change: Towards a micro-analysis in psychotherapy process research.* Norwood NJ: Ablex.

Seymour, F., & Towns, A. (1990). Family therapy research: New directions. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter* (2), 3-9.

Shipton, G. (Ed.). (1997). *Supervision of psychotherapy and counselling: Making a place to think.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Shohet, R., & Wilmot, J. (1991). The key issues in the supervision of counsellors: The supervisory relationship. In W. Dryden & B. Thorne (Eds.), *Training and supervision for counselling in action* (pp. 87-98). London: Sage.

Shotter, J. (1989). Social accountability and the social construction of 'you'. In J. Shotter & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Texts of identity* (pp. 133-151). London: Sage.

Shotter, J. (1992). 'Getting in touch': The meta-methodology of a postmodern science of mental life. In S. Kvale (Ed.), *Psychology and postmodernism* (pp. 58-73). London: Sage.

Shotter, J. (1993). *Conversational realities: Constructing life through language.* London: Sage.

Shotter, J. (1996). Wittgenstein in practice: From the way of theory to a social poetics. In C. Tolman, F. Cherry, & R. van Hezewijk (Eds.), *Problems of theoretical psychology* (pp. 3-12). North York, Canada: Captus University Press.

Shotter, J. (2000). From within our lives together: Wittgenstein, Bakhtin, Voloshinov and the shift to a participatory stance in understanding understanding. In L. Holzman & J. Morss (Eds.), *Postmodern psychologies, societal practice, and political life* (pp. 100-129). New York: Routledge.

Skinstad, A. H. (1993). Practicum supervision in Norway and the United States. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 71*, 406-408.

Skovholt, T., & Ronnestad, M. (1992). *The evolving professional self: Stages and themes in therapist and counselor development.* Chichester: Wiley.

Smith, T.E., Winton, M., & Yoshioka, M. (1992). A qualitative understanding of reflective-teams II: Therapists' perspectives. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 14*, 419-432.

Smith, T. E., Yoshioka, M., & Winton, M. (1993). A qualitative understanding of reflective -teams I: Client perspectives. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 12*(3), 28-43.

Stagoll, B. (2000). Interactions nor factions. [*Contribution to Dialogues of diversity in therapy: A virtual symposium*]. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 21*(3), 124-6.

Stewart, K., & Amundson, J. (1995). The ethical postmodernist: Or not everything is relative all at once. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, *14*(2), 70-78.

Stoltenberg, C. D. (1981). Approaching supervision from a developmental perspective: the counsellor complexity model. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *28,* 59-65.

Stoltenberg, C. D., & Delworth, U. (1987). *Supervising counselors and therapists: A developmental approach.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Stoltenberg, C. D., McNeill, B. W., & Crethar, H. C. (1994). Changes in supervision as counselors and therapists gain experience. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *25*, 416-449.

Storm, C. (1995). Swimming in a different stream: A supervisor's experience with social constructionist ideas. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*(2), i-iii.

Storm, C. (1997) The blueprint for supervision relationships: Contracts. In T. Todd & C. Storm, *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 272-282). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Stricker, G. (1992). The relationship of research to clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 47,* 543-549.

Swanson, J. L., & O'Saben, C. L. (1993). Differences in supervisory needs and expectations by trainee experience, cognitive style, and programme membership. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *71*, 457-464.

Sumeral, M. B., & Borders, L. D. (1996). Addressing personal issues in supervision: Impact of counsellors' experience level on various aspects of

the supervisory relationship. *Counsellor Education and Supervision, 35*, 268-286.

Tierney, W. G. (1997). Lost in translation. In W. G. Tierney & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the text: Reframing the narrative voice* (pp. 23-36). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Todd, T. C., & Storm, C. L. (Eds.). (1997a). *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Todd, T. C., & Storm, C. L. (1997b), Thoughts on the evolution of MFT supervision. In T. C. Todd & C.L. Storm (Eds.), *The complete systemic supervisor: Context, philosophy, and pragmatics* (pp. 1-16). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Tomm, K. (1993). The ethics of dual relationships. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, (3 & 4), 47-57.

Usher, C. H., & Borders L. D. (1993). Practicing counselors' preferences for supervisory style and supervisory emphasis. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *33*(2), 66-80

Walsh, R. A. (1996). The problem of unconsciousness in qualitative research. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24*, 377-384.

Webb, A., & Wheeler, S. (1998). How honest do counsellors dare to be in the supervisory relationship?: An exploratory study. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 26*, 509-524.

Webb, S. (1998, March). NZAC: Counting for something. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletter, 18*(4), 11-16.

Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Weingarten, K. (1992). Consultations to myself on a work/family dilemma: A postmodern feminist reflection. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 4*(1), 3-29.

Weingarten, K. (1997). *The mother's voice: Strengthening intimacy in families.* New York: Guilford.

Weingarten, K. (1998). The small and ordinary: The daily practice of a postmodern narrative therapy. *Family Process, 37,* 3-15.

Weingarten, K. (2000a). Witnessing, wonder, and hope. *Family Process, 39*, 389-402.

Weingarten, K. (2000b). Reflection. [*Contribution to Dialogues of diversity in therapy: A virtual symposium*]. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 21*(3), 132-4.

Wendorf, D. (1984). A model for training practising professionals in family therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 19*(1), 31-41.

West, J. D., Bubenzer D. L., Pinsoneault, T., & Holeman, V. (1993). Three supervision modalities for training marital and family counselors. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 33*(2), 127-138.

West, W. (1996). Using human inquiry groups in counselling research. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 24*, 347-355.

Whiston, S. (1996). Accountability through action research: Research methods for practitioners. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 74,* 616-623.

White, M. (1989). *Selected papers.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.

White, M. (1989/90, Summer). Family therapy training and supervision in a world of experience and narrative. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, 27-38.

White, M. (1992). *Learning edge* (video). Washington, D.: American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.

White, M. (1995). *Re-authoring lives: Interviews and essays.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.

White, M. (1997). *Narratives of therapists' lives.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.

White, M. (1999). Reflecting-team work as definitional ceremony revisited. *Gecko,* (2), 55-90.

White, M. (2001). Narrative practice and the unpacking of identity conclusions. *Gecko* (1), 28-55.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1989). *Literate means to therapeutic ends.* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.

White, Mark B. & Russell, C. (1997). Examining the multifaceted notion of isomorphism in marriage and family therapy supervision: A quest for conceptual clarity. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 23*(3), 315-333.

Wilbur, M. P., Roberts-Wilbur, J., Hart, G. M., Morris, J. R., & Betz, R. L. (1994). Structured group supervision (SGS): A pilot study. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 33,* 262-279.

Willig, C. (1998). Social constructionism and revolutionary socialism: A contradiction in terms? In I. Parker (Ed.), *Social constructionism, discourse and realism* (pp. 91-104). London: Sage.

Willig, C. (1999a). Introduction: Making a difference. In C. Willig (Ed.), *Applied discourse analysis* (pp. 1-21). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Willig, C. (1999b). Discourse analysis and sex education. In C. Willig (Ed.), *Applied discourse analysis* (pp. 110-124). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Willig, C. (1999c). Beyond appearances: A critical realist approach to social constructionist work. In D. J. Nightingale & J. Crombie (Eds.), *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice*, (pp. 37-51). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Willig, C. (2000). A discourse-dynamic approach to the study of subjectivity in health psychology. *Theory and Psychology, 10*, 547-570.

Winslade, J. (1997). Worries about increased surveillance of members. *New Zealand Association of Counsellors' Newsletter, 18* (2), 14-17.

Winslade, J., Crocket, K., & Monk, G. (1997). The therapeutic relationship. In G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket & D. Epston, (Eds.), *Narrative therapy in action: The archaeology of hope* (pp. 53-81). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Winslade, J., Crocket, K., Monk, G., & Drewery, W. (2000). The storying of professional development. In K. Eriksen & G. McAuliffe (Eds.), *Constructing counsellor education: Transformative teaching practices.* Washington: Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors.

Winslade, J., & Monk, G. (1999). *Narrative counseling in schools: Powerful and brief.* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press.

Winslade, J., Monk, G., & Drewery, W. (1997). Sharpening the critical edge: A social constructionist approach in counselor education. In T. Sexton & B. Griffin (Eds.), *Social constructivist applications in counselling and supervision* (pp. 228-245). Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press.

Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis and the study of doctor-patient interaction. In B.-L. Gunnarsson, P. Linell, & B. Nordberg (Eds.), *The construction of professional discourse* (pp. 173-200). Longman: London.

Worthington, E. L. (1987). Changes in supervision as counselors and supervisors gain experience: A review. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18,* 189-208.

Wylie, M. S. (1994). Panning for gold. *Networker*, Nov/Dec, 40-48.

Yeatman, A. (1996). The roles of scientific and non-scientific types of knowledge in the improvement of practice. *Australian Journal of Education, 40*, 284-301.

Young, J., Perlesz, A., Paterson, R., O'Hanlon, B., Newbold, A., Chaplin, R. & Bridge, S. (1989). The reflecting team process in training. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 10*(2), 69-74.

Young, J., Saunders, F., Prentice, G., Macri-Riseley, D., Fitch, R., & Pati-Tasca, C. (1997). Three journeys toward the reflecting team. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 18*(1), 27-37.

Zimmerman, J., & Dickerson, V. (1996). *If problems talked: Narrative therapy in action.* New York : Guilford.

Appendix I

UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES

PhD. Research Project:

NARRATIVE APPROACHES IN SUPERVISION - Kathie Crocket

Information for participants

Although I am known to you all in different contexts, I want to provide for you the material I gave to the Higher Degrees Committee, in which I located myself and the study I proposed.

Locating myself and this project

I come to this research project out of three professional roles - as a counsellor and a supervisor, and as a member of a team of counsellor educators.

I have worked as a counsellor for twelve years, eight of these in the Student Counselling Service at this university. Through this time I have engaged in individual, peer and group supervision of my own counselling practice with supervisors representing a range of theoretical perspectives, and using a range of working styles. For some years I have also provided professional supervision for counsellors in community and education settings, with changes in my style of supervising reflecting my changing theoretical orientation.

I am actively involved in the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, and was one of the first four and am still one of the few, Accredited Members of the association.

My experiences in counsellor education include my own university-based training at Massey University, two years as an associate lecturer contributing to the Professional Development papers at Massey, as well as my part-time membership of the counsellor education team in the Department of Education Studies at Waikato over the past four years.

My teaching focus within the counsellor education programme is professional practice. I am particularly interested in the interface between students' university-based learning experiences and their placement-based learning, and the critical role supervision plays as students of counselling produce themselves as professional counsellors.

Individually and together, these three professional roles provide an invitation to me to take up this research project. The New Zealand Association of Counsellor's Code for Supervision suggests supervisors need to engage in research in supervision. Schon's (1983) work on reflection in professional practice highlighted the value of the ongoing self-education that comes about when a practitioner "becomes a researcher into his (sic) own practice"(p.299). Schon goes on to make the claim that "research is an activity of practitioners" (p.308), and thus it is as a counsellor and as a supervisor and as an educator of counsellors that I wish to reflect on my own practice and engage with other practitioners in reflecting on their practices. This stance will be reflected in the research processes.

The standing ground which the University of Waikato counsellor education programme now occupies offers opportunity to make some important developments in supervision. We have the richness of a variety of traditions from which we can draw. We are locating our programme in social constructionist ideas (Winslade et al., 1994; Monk & Drewery, 1993; Monk et al., 1997). Worldwide, these ideas have been developed in counselling practice mostly by those who have historically identified themselves as **family therapists**. However, we are teaching the ideas within the context of a course with an historical focus on an eclectic approach to **counselling and guidance** in educational and community contexts. We thus bring together two major traditions, each with its own understandings and practices around supervision. We are further positioned by our identifying as counsellors professionally associated with the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, whose Code of Ethics and Code of Supervision further inform our expectations and understandings.

This history means that we are relying heavily on "borrowed" assumptions and practices in supervision. While many of these borrowings have been and continue to be useful, Schon's (1983, 1987) "reflective practitioner" stance alerts me to the value of giving an account of the ways in which these borrowings come together, and the kind of "fit" practitioners make in their practice as "espoused theory" and "theory in action" (Schon, 1987) interweave with each other.

Most important, however, is the need to continue to explore in action and reflection how the postmodern shift in counselling is mirrored in counselling supervision. The isomorphic relationship between counselling and supervision processes and counselling and supervising relationships is a recurring theme in the literature (Carifio and Hess, 1987; and Flemons, Green, & Rambo, 1996); and at the same time practitioners are making the case for the philosophies and practices they experience in supervision to be congruent with their choices of narrative-informed counselling.

As you may know, this project has had a long gestation, as I have worked my way through methodological possibilities and impossibilities. In what I propose I have taken as my guide Kaye's call that:

> Inquiry must derive from a framework capable of accessing the processes involved in psychotherapy if we are to become more effective therapists and if our research is to have any meaning for practitioners (Kaye, 1990 p.38).

This has led to my proposal to establish a collaborative inquiry group to:
* provide professional supervision for its members
* research that process.

I intend that, within the structure and processes that I propose, the group will provide rich professional development opportunities for us all, along with rich material to inform my research.

I am interested in and willing to answer any further questions you may have.

Kathie Crocket.
February 1997.

Appendix II

UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES

PhD. Research Project:

NARRATIVE APPROACHES IN SUPERVISION - Kathie Crocket

Proposed ethical guidelines for collaborative inquiry group

These guidelines are to be read alongside NZAC Code of Ethics, to which all group members adhere.

* A formal supervision agreement will be established, so that all the supervision within this group is subject to the standards of confidentiality of NZAC Code of Ethics and Code of Supervision.

* This group will provide formal supervision of all the counselling work of these members:

* We intend that this group will provide a safe forum in which participants are able to disclose all significant supervision material. Where a group member is unable to do this about a particular issue that requires attention, she will take responsibility for seeking individual supervision from another group member/another supervisor, and will inform the group of that.

* All notes produced within group sessions and transcripts of sessions will be treated with the standard of care of other professional practice material, and kept secure.

* Any concerns group members have about the group or aspects of its process will be brought to the attention of the group.

* We will disclose the nature of group members' other relationships, past and continuing, with each other at the outset of the group.

* Group members will provide professional disclosure to clients of their participation in the inquiry group, preferably through a written professional disclosure statement, such as:

> *As a counsellor I have a commitment to regular professional supervision. In 1997 I am participating in a supervision group, which also involves research.*

* While being free to discuss in appropriate professional contexts the learning and practice developments in the group, we will do so in a way that protects other group members from harm.

* The usual standards of care in regard to confidentiality for counselling clients when we speak in supervision will apply. Group members will take the responsibility for informing Kathie as the researcher, where transcripts need amending or audio/video tapes need editing in order to protect counselling clients from being identified in the dissemination of information through the formal research stages of the process.

* While it will be Kathie's ultimate responsibility as researcher, to ensure that group processes are respectful, all group members share responsibility for ensuring that group processes are safe and respectful.

Appendix III

UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES

PhD. Research Project:

NARRATIVE APPROACHES IN SUPERVISION - Kathie Crocket

Proposed structural guidelines - collaborative inquiry group

Group members agree to being involved in the following professional and research activities:

1. Initial formal group meeting to:
i. formally propose my ideas to potential participants
ii. negotiate working agreement
iii. negotiate ethical guidelines
iv. negotiate structure for group meetings
v. "teach" reflecting team processes

2. First supervision meeting:
- use dyadic/reflecting team structure to give each counsellor an opportunity to clarify, and determine goals and directions for themselves in supervision, and in the project, for the following five months.
- establish a "timetable" for supervision, that sets out the roles each member will take in subsequent sessions.

3. Subsequent meetings for supervision:
i. Nominated counsellor-supervisor dyad engage in supervision for 25-30 minutes, observed by the reflecting team.
ii. Reflecting team offer thoughts on counsellor's material. (10 minutes)
iii. Counsellor responds. (5 minutes)
iv. Reflecting team offers thoughts on supervision processes. (10 minutes)
v. Supervisor responds.

This process will generally be repeated twice each time the group meets. Over twelve meetings each group member will have worked twice in a dyad with each other member, once as counsellor and once as supervisor.

4. Every third meeting the process outlined in 3, above, will not be repeated. Instead, the second part of the session will be used to review:
- members' experiences of the supervision they are giving and receiving, and of the group's working,
- the knowledges and practices around supervision that we have been generating.
-
5. Research focus
The group will meet three times during the year, for longer sessions at times to be negotiated, with the research focus the only agenda. Kathie will facilitate a meta-level structured reflection that focuses on the central research questions:

* What constitutes effective counselling supervision in this counselling community?

* What does embracing a social constructionist position mean for how supervisors and counsellors engage in professional supervision?

* What, then, are the implications for the education of counsellors and supervisors in supervision in the narrative mode?

Kathie will take formal responsibility for facilitating group process, recognising that group members bring skills and experience to share that task.

To discuss:
*Withdrawal from the group

Appendix IV

UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES

PhD. Research Project:

NARRATIVE APPROACHES IN SUPERVISION - Kathie Crocket

Proposed supervision working agreement

* We agree to meet as a collaborative inquiry group that will provide professional supervision for us as its members.

* We will provide peer supervision of our own and other members' counselling work, using the processes outlined in *Structural Guidelines.*

* We take on jointly the supervisory responsibility, outlined in the NZAC Code of Supervision, for the counselling work of each group member.

* As Members of New Zealand Association of counsellors, we abide by the NZAC Code of Ethics.

* The group will meet for supervision in the Student Services Seminar room at the University of Waikato.

* We will meet weekly/fortnightly to provide supervision, using the structure set out in the structural guidelines.

* We will meet on .... days at ....., for two hours.

* Kathie will prepare the venue and make video and audio equipment available. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available in the 15 minutes before the group begins.

* We agree to participate in the research context of this group as outlined in the *Information for participants,* and in the *Ethical* and *Structural Guidelines.*

* We agree to each session being videotaped and audiotaped for research purposes, and to Val Lazenby transcribing the audiotapes.

* Kathie will post each group member two copies of the transcript, one for the member to read, and another which members each agree to comment on and return to Kathie.

* We agree to audiotapes being made by individual group members to make use of supervision discussion for ongoing client work. These latter audiotapes will be wiped 2 months after being recorded.

* There will no exchange of money for supervision.

* Group members will expect to attend every meeting of the group, whether practice- or research-focused.

* The group begins with an expectation that members are committed to participating from February to December 1997.

* Should a group member wish to withdraw before December 97, we prefer that to be done in negotiation with the group. Where that is not possible, a withdrawing member is asked to invite a mutually acceptable support person to negotiate withdrawal from the research process with Kathie, or with Kathie and her supervisors.

- Group members with any concerns about the group are welcome to raise these in the group, to speak with Kathie, or to approach her academic supervisors.

Appendix V

UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES

PhD. Research Project:

NARRATIVE APPROACHES IN SUPERVISION - Kathie Crocket

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Now that I have provided you with my ideas and hopes for this research project, both in informal contact and in the *Information for participants*, *I* need to ask you to give your formal assent to participation in the project. I know that as a professional counsellor, and as a researcher, you will be aware that I will be conducting this research within the context of both the professional ethical codes, and the University of Waikato procedures and principles for conducting research. In asking, now, that you sign this research consent form, I am not wanting to rigidly delineate these matters in a way that is contrary to the collaborative spirit of the project, but rather to propose a clear starting point from which I can gain approval from the School Ethics Committee, in order to begin formally negotiating within the group working documents that will give account of the ethical context in which we all agree to situate this project.

I enclose:

i. Proposed ethical guidelines for the group.
ii. Proposed structural guidelines for the group.

I am willing and keen to answer any questions you have now or at any time.

Please answer the questions below and sign both copies of the form (one for each of us) if you are satisfied to do so.

With thanks.

Kathie Crocket.
February 1997.

To participants:

Do you understand that I am undertaking this project partly in fulfilment of a PhD. degree, and so am subject to university requirements and to oversight from the nominated university academic staff, Dr Wendy Drewery and Dr Monica Payne?

Yes: No

Have you read the *Information for participants*?

Yes: No

Do you have sufficient information to make a decision to enter into the first stages of involvement in the research process?

Yes: No

Do you agree to meet with me and a small group to consider the possibilities that this project offers and the commitment that you are willing to make to it?

Yes: No

If you wish to participate in the ongoing collaborative inquiry group, do you agree at that meeting to negotiate and develop the attached supervision working agreement in regard to the supervision we will undertake?

Yes: No

If you wish to participate in the ongoing inquiry group, do you agree that at that meeting to negotiate or to amend the attached proposed ethical guidelines for the group in its work and to participate in the project within the context of those guidelines?

Yes: No

If you wish to participate in the ongoing collaborative inquiry group, do you agree at that meeting to negotiate or approve or amend the attached proposed structural guidelines for the group in its work and to participate in the project within the context of those guidelines?

Yes: No

Do you agree to the taping of the initial group meeting?

Yes: No

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Appendix VI Source and location of extracts

Supervision	*Counsellor/ Supervisor*	*Extract*
1		
2		
3		
4	Beth/Raewyn	Extract 11.1 Storying professional identity: celebration
	Emma/Di	Extract 8.2 Assuming competence
5	Zoe/Leah	Extract 7.1 Reproducing instrumental practice
6		
7	Maureen/Olive	Extract 10.4 Taking responsibility for taking a position
	Val/*Kathie*	Extract 11.2 The speaking subject
		Research Meeting One
8	Laura/Elise	Extract 10.3 Deconstructing inquiry
9	*Withdrawn*	
10		
11		
12	Tania/Adele	Extract 9.2 Deconstructing supervision
	Tania/Adele	Extract 10.1 Joining a community of concern
13	*Cancelled*	
14	Margaret /Louisa	Extract 9.3 Positions for ethical action
	Carol	Extract 10.2 A giving up story
		Research Meeting Two
15		
16	Deb/Jean	Extract 9.1 Dialogic assessment: producing responsibility
17		
18	Lee/Ruth	Extract 8.1 Interrogating decision making discourse
	Lee /Ruth	Extract 8.3 Counsellor as researcher of practice
19		
		Research Meeting Three

Review Meetings at **Supervision 3, 6, 9, 12, 18.**

On all other occasions there were two separate supervision sessions, each working through the four phases of the reflecting team process for supervision.